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BY GERALD ABRAHAM

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Bartók is said to have written his earliest string quartet in 1899, but this work, like most of his early compositions, has never been published. The published quartets are dated as follows:

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and thus give a fairly complete cross-section of Bartók's development. Edwin von der Nüll has traced that development, up to the first piano Concerto,¹ through the piano music; but although the piano compositions are much more numerous, they are marked by such vagaries of style—many being folksong arrangements or pieces for children—that they do not collectively give such a clear impression as the six quartets. Moreover the quartets represent Bartók's best or at any rate most serious work at each period—which can hardly be said of many of the piano pieces. The Bartók revealed by the quartets (we may put it) is the greater part of Bartók, though by no means the whole Bartók.

The earliest work in which Bartók showed his real mettle was the set of fourteen 'Bagatelles' for piano, Op. 6. The 'Bagatelles' might serve almost as a dictionary of modern music; each is a study in one or more of the devices that were just being added to the musician's vocabulary:

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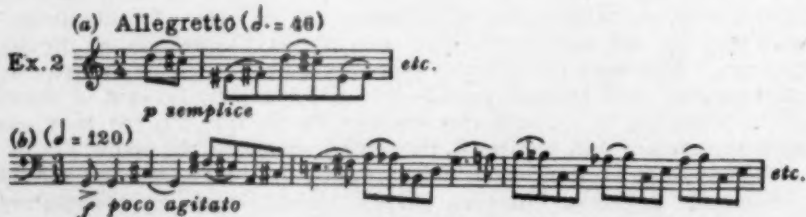
¹ Béla Bartók (Halle, 1930).

polytonality, added-note chords, fourth-chords and melodies derived from them, appoggiaturas used instead of "real" notes of the harmony, and so on. There are some charming things among the 'Bagatelles,' but a good many dry things. One gets the impression that some of them are rather cold-blooded, cerebral experiments; indeed Bartók himself admitted as much to von der Nüll. As a set they are much less immediately attractive than the 'Ten Easy Piano Pieces' written in the same year: 1908. The first string Quartet also dates from 1908, and bears the opus-number following that of the 'Bagatelles'; it also bears traces of the same delight in new-found resources. But it has none of the naked experimentalism of the 'Bagatelles'; it is live music. It is essentially, perhaps, not so very different from the earlier Bartók, though the thought is now expressed in more difficult idioms. The middle section of the slow first movement, for instance:



is of the early, not the mature Bartók. And the expressive canon, first for the violins, then for viola and cello (with the violins continuing in free parts), which opens the movement and, in a curtailed form, closes it, has really very little in common with Bartók's later uncompromisingly linear style; the chromatic polyphony should be no more, if no less, worrying to modern ears than the polyphony of the Prelude to Act III of 'Parsifal' was to Victorian ears, and it analyses out, harmonically, in something the same way. Nor does the *allegretto* second movement, which follows without a break, offer any special difficulty; the thirds in which the transition-theme is stated are curiously un-Bartókian. (I call it the transition-theme because it is so used, although it is later woven firmly into the movement proper).

There is a break after this second movement, and with the introduction to the third we at last reach music that bears the quite unmistakable hall-mark of Bartók: "stamping" chords for the three upper strings, the only outlet for his tendency to percussiveness that he had yet found through this medium, and the rhapsodic cello recitative that answers them. Two points in particular attract attention in the recitative: the ♩. rhythmic figure, from Hungarian folksong, and a motive obviously derived from an accompaniment figure that has played an important part in the *allegretto*:



But it is only with the opening of the finale proper that the importance of this motive becomes fully manifest:

Ex. 3

(Vlns.) *p*
mf
a
b
cresc.
etc.

(Vla, Cello unis.) *mf*
cresc.

(The chafing seconds of the violin parts are, of course, very characteristic of Bartók; but their uncharacteristic resolution suggests that the movement dates from before the piano 'Bagatelles.') Ex. 3 turns out to be the first subject of a movement conceived broadly on the lines of sonata form. However bold his melodic, rhythmic and harmonic experiments, Bartók has seldom revealed revolutionary views of form, though the third Quartet is boldly experimental; indeed he has often appeared definitely conservative in this respect. In this movement the formal outline is easily recognizable despite the organic fusion of sections and the blurring of tonality and cadences. The key is A minor—a very Bartókian A minor, of course—and the exposition consists mostly of development (the motive *a*, worked imitatively, *b* more lyrically); a second subject duly turns up, *adagio*, in what Bartók probably regarded as B flat minor; and there is a development "proper", beginning with a declamatory octave passage and proceeding by way of a lengthy *fugato* on a theme evolved from Ex. 3. The evolving process includes the growth of a new motive with a triplet kink, which plays some part in the recapitulation, but the recapitulation is no freer than many classical examples, and the *adagio* second subject even recurs in the tonic. Bartók was still clinging to shreds of the tonal principle when he wrote his first Quartet.

In the interval between this and the second Quartet he wrote, among other things, the 'Dirges' for piano, 'Bluebeard's Castle', the 'Deux Images' and 'Four Pieces', Op. 12, for orchestra, and 'The Woodcut Prince', works in which he showed himself a complete master of the new resources that had been only partly assimilated in 1908. The second Quartet is thoroughly characteristic in a way that the first, as a whole, is not. It is by no means as difficult to grasp as the next two quartets of ten years or so later; but, standing back from the quartets as a series and trying to consider them in perspective, one feels that perhaps Nos. 3 and 4 are in one sense only complications and subtilizations of an essence that is already fully present in No. 2. The simplicity and intimacy of No. 2, as compared with No. 1, are very noticeable, and the chief second-subject theme of the first movement is remarkable for its euphony (admittedly a rare quality in Bartók), particularly when it returns in the recapitulation:

Ex. 4

(♩ = 132)

Violins *p dolce*
 Cello *pp*



For the first movement of No. 2, like the finale of No. 1, is in sonata form, and the two movements have this further point in common that one of the transition themes here has precisely the same triplet "kink" that we noticed in the earlier work. To speak of "themes" in the ordinary sense, however, becomes a little misleading in dealing with music of this type. There are motives of four or five notes, and there are thoughts spread over many bars; but the motives by no means constitute the true substance of the thoughts: they are not so much the bricks in the musical structure as the mortar. The subtlety with which motive grows from motive, and with which a motive gradually assumes a new form, is well worth close study (there are striking parallels to Sibelius's methods), but could be shown here only with the help of abundant music-type examples. However, two shorter examples must be used to illustrate one other characteristic of Bartók's handling of sonata form: his conception of reprise. In his recapitulations themes are liable to return in strongly modified forms; as a rule in simpler or at any rate more easily apprehended forms and in a purer harmonic atmosphere. I quote the opening of this movement and the parallel passage, the opening of the recapitulation:

(a) Moderato (♩ = 138-150)

Violins
Ex. 5
p sempre tenuto

Viola
& Cello
p

Tempo I, ma sempre molto tranquillo
p dolce

(♩ = 130)
p tenuto
etc.

Both the scherzo and the *lento* finale present peculiar puzzles and attractions. The puzzle of the scherzo is its form, which appears at first hearing or reading to be hardly existent—or at any rate to be conditioned simply by the heading, *Allegro molto capriccioso (sic)*, and held together by nothing more than its persistent minor-third motive. But if it be considered as a suite of miniature dances connected by lyrical interludes, on exactly the same lines as the much more extended 'Dance Suite' for orchestra (written in 1923), everything becomes clear. Like the dances that make up this later Suite, those of the middle movement of the Quartet are attractive and strongly rhythmical; not (I should say) actual folk dances or imitations of them, but impregnated, like the vast bulk of Bartók's music, with influences from Magyar folk music. The gradual—and to the unaided ear quite imperceptible—transition from the 2-4 of the *sostenuto* interlude to the 3-4 of the *allegro molto* dance is typical of Bartók's plastic conception of rhythm and tempo.

The final *lento* is harder to accept. Its painful brooding tries the ear's patience much more than the lively clashes of the middle movement. Bartók seems here to be experimenting a little too self-consciously with his fourths-harmony; near the end he builds up a chord of five perfect fourths (A#, D#, G#, C#, F#, B). But the muted passage, *lento assai*, is a beautiful demonstration of the expressive possibilities of this generally rather hard and unyielding harmonic idiom:

Lento assai (♩ = 52)

Violins

Ex. 6

pp con sord.

Viola & Cello

espress. molto

molto

pp

molto

pp

This is Schoenbergian; but comparison with, say, the opening of the second of Schoenberg's 'Fünf Orchesterstücke':

Moderato crotchets

Solo Cello

Ex. 7

p

Ob.

Muted Trpt.

Fag.

B. Cl. & Muted Horn

Muted Tromb.

will at once show Bartók's superior expressive power.

The finale of Op. 17 is to me the only really "difficult" movement of the first two quartets, but in Nos. 3 and 4 the difficulties thicken. No. 3 is a particularly hard nut to crack; it came as the climax to a whole series of "difficult" works including the two violin Sonatas, the piano Sonata and the first piano Concerto. To the customary harmonic difficulties of Bartók's music and the difficulty of a melodic idiom of which one parent is a particularly remote folk music, the other intellectual modernism, are added special difficulties of structure: of both inner, detailed structure and outer, general structure. Bartók's motive-logic is nowhere tighter than in the third Quartet, but it is also nowhere more elliptical than in its *prima parte*. To grasp all the links in the chain of musical reasoning is impossible to the unaided ear, difficult to the score-reading eye. Yet one feels with absolute conviction that this is not mere paper music, like so much of Schoenberg; the ingenuities of motive-logic constitute the structural principle, the organic tissue, of the music—not its real sense. That has to be apprehended in longer periods. One may put it that Bartók's third Quartet occupies the same place in his whole work as Sibelius's fourth Symphony in his. The gradual growth of one motive-form into another, the constructive functions of certain intervals (particularly the perfect fourth), and on the other hand the alteration of intervals to provide new melodic forms: all demand bar-by-bar study. But, short of critical exegesis on that scale, one can still point out the best ways of penetrating to the heart of the music. For Bartók is consistent in his personal development; one can generally find clues to his new works in his earlier music; he even opens this "difficult" third Quartet, after the five introductory bars, with a canon for the violins—a very Bartókian canon with inessential notes:

Moderato (♩ = 88)

Violin I
Ex. 8

Violin II

Cello

The musical score is presented in three staves: Violin I, Violin II, and Cello. The tempo is marked 'Moderato (♩ = 88)'. The first system consists of three measures. In the first measure, Violin I has a half note G4, Violin II has a half note G4, and the Cello has a half note G2. In the second measure, Violin I has a half note A4, Violin II has a half note A4, and the Cello has a half note A2. In the third measure, Violin I has a half note B4, Violin II has a half note B4, and the Cello has a half note B2. The second system also consists of three measures. In the first measure, Violin I has a half note C5, Violin II has a half note C5, and the Cello has a half note C3. In the second measure, Violin I has a half note D5, Violin II has a half note D5, and the Cello has a half note D3. In the third measure, Violin I has a half note E5, Violin II has a half note E5, and the Cello has a half note E3. The score ends with 'etc.'.

precisely as he had opened the first Quartet with a canon for the violins. And, as I have said, Bartók's themes are liable to return, in recapitulations, in more easily apprehended forms and in a purer harmonic atmosphere. So we shall do well to look for the thematic clue to the Quartet on some later page. And accordingly we shall find it, not in the part of the Quartet actually marked *ricapitolazione della prima parte*, but towards the end of the *prima parte* itself:



That passage, played by second violin and viola in octaves, contains the thematic germ of the whole movement.

But in this Quartet it is perhaps wrong to speak of "movements". It plays without a break and, like so many older and newer experiments in single-movement cyclic form (Sibelius's seventh Symphony is one of the few exceptions), fails to convince one that it is wholly successful. In the later quartets Bartók returned to a more normal plan. But here he gives us a *prima parte*, an exposition of the hard sayings just discussed, followed by a *seconda parte* which is best described as incessant variations on a seven-bar theme of folk-dance character:



The variations, all very typical of Bartók's method of moulding his material plastically, grow very naturally, each from its predecessor, and—with all their use of transformation and inversion, canon and fugue—are easy to follow. But having towards the end reminded us in a *meno mosso*, *martellato* passage of a point in the first movement, they break into what the composer calls a *ricapitolazione della prima parte*. Needless to say, it is a recapitulation only in the Pickwickian sense, not only much condensed but with the material altered generally beyond aural recognition. And the work ends with a coda that is essentially a brilliant and exuberant continuation of the *seconda parte*.

The third Quartet is "on", but not "in", C#. That is to say, there is no trace of major or minor tonality and C# cannot be called a tonic, but the note C# acts as a centre of gravity, an artificial tonic. Similarly the fourth Quartet is "on" C and the fifth "on" Bb. Written at an interval of six years, with the second piano Concerto half-way between them, they represent successive stages of descent from the asperity of No. 3. Each is in five movements, of which the first and fifth, and second and fourth, in each case balance each other:

No. 4
 Allegro
 Prestissimo
 Non troppo lento
 Allegretto pizzicato
 Allegro molto

No. 5
 Allegro
 Adagio molto
 Scherzo (alla bulgarese)
 Andante
 Finale (presto)

In both Quartets the first movements are in easily recognizable sonata form, though in No. 4 some of the material, and in No. 5 all the material,

is inverted in the recapitulation. And in No. 5 the second subject returns before the first (for which, of course, there are precedents in the nineteenth-century romantics), so that not only the whole Quartet but also its first movement is in this "arch" form, A B C B A, which may well have been suggested to Bartók by Alfred Lorenz's monumental 'Geheimnis der Form bei Richard Wagner', of which the first volume was published in 1924 and which has much to say about *Bogenform*. I should explain that the first and fifth, and second and fourth, movements correspond to some extent in substance as well as in general tempo. The finale of No. 4 is based on material from the first movement, and the endings of both movements are practically identical. Again, as Alexander Jemnitz was the first to point out,² the rondo-finale of No. 5 is based on a free inversion of the chief theme of the first movement; while the two slow movements are not only linked by common motive-particles, both have the same expressive melody as their central feature—though the *adagio* melody:



is naturally varied in the *andante*:



The central *alla bulgarese*, again, is cast in the classical scherzo-trio-scherzo pattern, the scherzo material being inverted the second time.

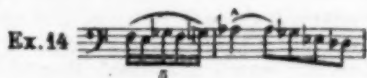
As sheer sound that shimmering *alla bulgarese* (which repays comparison with the last six pieces, the Bulgarian dances, of 'Mikrokosmos') is delicious. Indeed the whole of the fifth Quartet is less trying to the unaccustomed ear than the fourth, much less than the third. The two slow movements are easily appreciable; so too is the rondo-finale with its odd grimace in A major, *con indifferenza* and *meccanico*, just before the coda, though I personally find less in it than in the powerful dancing finale of No. 4. The opening theme of the first movement represents a remarkable adaptation of Bartók's innate percussive tendency to the quartet medium:



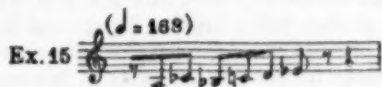
² His long and detailed study of the fifth Quartet in 'Musica Viva' (April 1930) is the only really thorough and satisfactory analysis of a Bartók quartet I have ever come across.



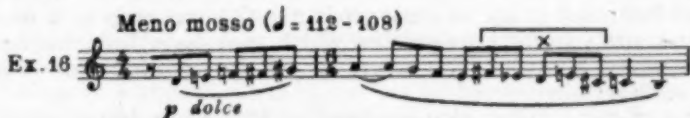
Once more a canonic exposition! (Though my quotation is necessarily too short to show more than the beginning of the long-breathed canon.) Very characteristic of Bartók's motive-technique is the way the quintuplet "kink" inserted in the viola-cello line in bars 8, 10 and 11:



is beheaded and given a new tail to become the coda theme:



Its shadow, *cancrizans*^(a), had already fallen across the second subject:



Or is that too fanciful? But such thematic subtleties are intensely characteristic of Bartók. He moulds and remoulds his motive-particles, resolving one shape into another until it is quite impossible to determine whether such subtleties are deliberate or accidental. But (it cannot be too often repeated) this motive technique is simply a device for forming musical tissue, a means to an end, not the end itself. It must be admitted, however, that in beauty of sound the central movement of No. 4—lacking these subtleties, but with sonorous long-held and repeated chords, against which the cello sings a very Hungarian rhapsody—and the two slow movements of No. 5 surpass the much more finely woven quick movements of either quartet. Amateurs often approach Beethoven, too, most easily through his slow movements.

From the third Quartet onward Bartók began to experiment with new sound-effects. In No. 3, in addition to all the customary colour-devices of *ponticello* and so on, including passages *col legno*, he introduces long *glissandi* on all four instruments simultaneously and double-stops *glissando*; in the coda he employs quadruple stopping on the cello, played downward or down-and-up. In No. 4 he not only gives this new up-and-down arpeggio effect to the other instruments as well, but experiments with a new type of percussive pizzicato: "a strong pizzicato making the string rebound off the fingerboard". The latter is used again, though for one note only, at the end of the scherzo of No. 5; and in the adagio of No. 5 the second violin, accompanying Ex. 11, is asked to play four notes "pizzicato with the nail of the first finger of

the left hand, at the extreme end of the string". But I must emphasize that all these "tricks" are used very sparingly.

They are used again, though very little, in the sixth Quartet—separated from the fifth by a group of works that includes the Sonata for two pianos and percussion, the 'Music for Strings, Percussion and Celesta' and the violin Concerto. Like the Concerto, the sixth Quartet represents yet a further stage in Bartók's progress toward classic simplicity. Texture, form, rhythm: all are crystal-clear, especially in the two "outside" movements. Nearest to the earlier Bartók are the second and third movements: a march (akin, but far superior, to the 'Verbunkos' first of the three 'Contrasts' for violin, clarinet and piano written the year before) and a 'Burletta'. For in No. 6 the composer abandons the five-movement "arch" of its two predecessors and tackles the problem of over-all formal unity in a new way, or rather by a new application of that favourite nineteenth-century device, the motto theme. The motto here is the mournful, Magyar-folksongish strain played by the viola unaccompanied at the very beginning. Played by the cello against a shimmering, muted background, it also introduces the march; worked polyphonically, it provides the prelude to the 'Burletta'. But in none of these three movements does it play any but a preludial part. It is an *idée fixe* three times shaken off. In the short, sad finale it returns and refuses to be shaken off. It dominates the whole movement, and though two of the main themes of the first movement proper make a transitory appearance—the usual Bartókian link between first and last movements—they are now heard in slow tempo, subdued to the mood of the motto theme. And with the first part of the motto, again on the viola, in its original form and at the original pitch, the Quartet ends in a mood of profound and mournful resignation which may have been inspired by contemporary events. (The score, it will be remembered, is dated "August-November 1939.")

Most of the familiar characteristics of Bartók's technical procedure reappear in the sixth Quartet, e.g. when the march proper is repeated after the trio, some of the material returns in free inversion. But everything sounds clearer, easier, less aggressively individual. The first movement is in absolutely classical sonata form with a return to something very like tonality: a first subject in D minor-major and a second subject in a contrasted key in the exposition, in a reconciled key in the recapitulation. And there is more than one point where one is reminded of Beethoven's last quartets: at the beginning, for instance, directly after the viola motto, all four instruments in *pesante* octaves announce the real first subject of the movement in rhythmic augmentation—a passage precisely parallel to the opening of the 'Grosse Fuge'—while the main theme of the march awakens echoes of the *alla marcia* in Op. 132. Such similarities are only superficial, musically of no importance. Yet somehow they do not seem insignificant. It is not insignificant that one can mention Beethoven's last quartets and Bartók's in the same sentence without appearing ridiculous.

THOUGHTS FROM PYTHAGORAS

By VICTOR BENNETT

THE philosopher who turns his attention to music finds that his thought may take flight in two directions. He may, first of all, attempt to give an account of what music is in itself and what its effect is upon human nature. This is the inward side of musical philosophy; but if he is presumptuous enough to be satisfied with what he is able to surmise in this way or despairful enough to abandon further attempt, there remains for him an outward side to study. This outward side consists of the relation that music bears to philosophy as a whole or, if it be objected that there is no such thing as philosophy as a whole, then to philosophic ideas at large. If his thoughts proceed in this direction, they must encounter some such question as "What importance has music as an element of the universe?" As for his answer, it is not made any more easy to frame by the fact that the majority of eminent philosophers have attached little or no importance to music. Even Plato, who recognizes the high educational value of music, makes no attempt to relate it to ultimate reality. It is true that in relating the Myth of Er he introduces the celebrated doctrine of the Harmony of the Spheres, but this is made a mere incident in his statement on the Immortality of the Soul and it evidently fails to hold his interest.

Our philosopher, however, is not without consolation. Around this idea of the Harmony of the Spheres there clusters a tradition which, if it be but a minor one, has for music some impressive claims to make. This tradition, it is true, is not very coherent, but it may yet become so. Its threads are scattered, but they may yet be gathered up. It is a tradition which is as much the province of poets as of accredited philosophers, but which, nevertheless, has behind it a force of intuition which ensures its survival after each recurring age of rationalism. When it develops, the philosopher is bound to remark, it has a surprising way of doing so by leaps and bounds, but its origin is not merely ancient but venerable. To begin at the beginning is to return to the source of so very much that is mysterious and valuable in the world of ideas; to return, that is, to Pythagoras.

In that legendary sage the learned satirists of ancient and modern times have found a favourite object of exercise. No doubt that is not precisely the kind of immortality he would have welcomed, nor is it his just reward. What brought it upon him was his innocence as to the sobering effect which rationalistic modes of thought have upon philosophy, though indeed it was he who put system into the nebulous notions that prevailed in the Orphic cult. He would have agreed with Montaigne that philosophy is but sophisticated poetry, and not felt that the connection was a damaging one. Other thinkers have been pleased to ally philosophy with science or logic, but philosophy has never been more than half made up of these quantities. The other half of philosophy consists of spontaneous ideas, which often can neither be proved nor disproved, and of this creative side of philosophy Pythagoras is surely the prophet, so that he remains, as he was in his own day, at the centre of the philosophic storm. Indeed a man who can project his influence over 2,500 years without leaving a written record of his teaching, and without having more than a few of his sayings recorded for him, belongs to a very select gallery of human genius. Such an effect was possible only

to a man with an abundant fertility of ideas and a passion in expounding them which set men on fire. He was himself intoxicated in the wine-cellar of wisdom, and it could have been no ordinary experience when his disciples gathered to hear him speak and beheld the universe yield up its secrets in a unique composition of music, mathematics and metaphysics.

That Pythagoras was a shrewd and practical seeker after truth and no vain dreamer is shown by his discovery that musical intervals depend upon numerical ratios and by his conjecture that the heavenly bodies were of a spherical shape. When, therefore, we come to consider the Harmony of the Spheres, the doctrine by which he is best known to posterity, it is important to distinguish the essential value of the fancy from the artificial wrappings it had acquired by the time it comes to light in the tenth book of Plato's 'Republic'. Its inclusion there may be in the nature of a grave Platonic joke or as an example of the "useful myth". At any rate it is permissible to doubt whether all the extravagances with which the idea is there decked out are to be attributed to Pythagoras himself, for few great men have had followers more exuberant or less prudent. The eight concentric whorls which, in the account given in the 'Republic', make up the heavenly bodies may have been a Pythagorean conception, for eight was one of his favourite numbers; but it seems that some less skilled artificer inserted into each whorl a siren who, with inexplicable conservation of breath, piped forever a single note as she travelled, thus contributing with her sisters to the production of one lost chord of music; for humanity could not hear the sound, for the simple reason that it never varied and never ceased.

The ancient fancy may have been pleased with the notion that the large spaces of the skies were redeemed by the feminine touch of these choristers, but the fact is that their presence among the spheres has put a brake upon the efforts of subsequent philosophers to manœuvre the basic idea of planetary music. The written sources of an idea, indeed, command such respect that so fine a mind as Milton's could in 'Arcades' not only borrow from the fantastic astronomy of the Myth of Er, but when moved to amendment stipulated that there were not eight sirens but nine. A philosopher, however, can do little with a siren, and it is evident that these particular sirens have been all too successful in keeping philosophers in thrall. Let us by all means dismiss Plato's octet as a Republican prejudice and Milton's team of nine as a Renaissance extravagance. It is still to Milton we may turn, for as well as being deeply impressed with the notion of the Harmony of the Spheres, he was exceptionally sensitive to music of more human origin, and he has elsewhere more illuminating things to say.

If in 'Arcades' Milton puts into verse a description of the sirens and the spheres more or less the same as Plato gives, in another poem of great importance in this connection, namely 'At a Solemn Music', he shows how the same ideas may be converted without excessive strain into terms more familiar to Christian thought. In the latter poem the sirens have taken upon themselves the form of angels, and these angels serve not the "distaff of Necessity", according to the old and curious pagan belief, but the throne of the Christian Godhead. Moreover, the heaven in which they sing is now no longer confused with the stellar system, and the inaudibility of their singing on earth is due not to the even quality of their harmony but to a tone-deafness of the human race, which is the result of sin. This composition of Christian and Pagan thought is a characteristic achievement of Milton's, yet it is made at considerable expense to the doctrine of Plato and Pythagoras. By removing the angelic music from

the physical universe Milton bereaves it of much of its present interest. As it is no longer an element of the observed world, it has lost most of its philosophic utility.

Between 'Arcades' and 'At a Solemn Music' there is, however, a middle way of interpretation which Milton exhibits in the poem 'Hymn on the Morning of Christ's Nativity':

Ring out, ye crystal spheres!
Once bless our human ears,
If ye have power to touch our senses so;
And let your silver chime
Move in melodious time;
And let the bass of heaven's deep organ blow.

In this instance there is music within the compass of the fixed stars, yet the traditional sirens are neither acknowledged nor transmuted, but simply ignored. Shakespeare's well-known lines from 'The Merchant of Venice' are even more pointed:

There's not the smallest orb which thou behold'st
But in his motion like an angel sings,
Still quiring to the young-eyed cherubims,
Such harmony is in immortal souls;
But while this muddy vesture of decay
Doth grossly close it in, we cannot hear it.

Plato's scheme has undergone a useful refinement. Here we have light on what Pythagoras meant, or if not what he meant, then on the essential thing at which his thought aimed. Our national poets have no paltering with sirens. They perceive that there is no need for such blustering busybodies, so incompetent to survive a critical inquiry. In addition they have disencumbered us of the eight concentric whorls. But there remain the spheres and there remains the music. With these as all our need the essence of Pythagoras becomes luminous.

Every orb is allowed to sing, and to sing of itself. No mouth articulates; it is the motion of the spheres that makes the music of the spheres. The motion and the music are coincident, in fact identical. The heavenly bodies sing as they move and because they move, and since they move always, they make music always, each with its own tone blending into the inconceivable hymn of the whole heavenly system.

Milton and Shakespeare were giving expression to the conception of the Harmony of the Spheres which had become current in their day, but it is natural to ask by what authority the ancient Greek version of the matter had been amended. To find an answer to this we must recall that somewhat astonishing text from the Book of Job: "When the morning stars sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy." Some Biblical commentators have suggested that "morning stars" is here but a figurative expression meaning angels, others that these words should be understood literally but that the word "sang" is figurative. The true meaning of the passage cannot certainly be established, but by Christian scholars it was for long associated with the Pythagorean belief, which it was held to confirm, and it is still legitimate to take this view. There can in any case be little doubt that the excitement caused by this text mingled with the stream of Pythagorean and Platonic thought and modified it. While, in the lines quoted, Milton and Shakespeare were drawing mainly from the Greek source, in effect their conceptions had been purified by a scriptural one. It is interesting, to say the least, that the Book of Job was written, as it is believed, a thousand years before the time of Pythagoras.

The remoulding of the idea of the Harmony of the Spheres by the Renaissance may seem to involve no large alteration, but in fact that

alteration has some extreme consequences. While the ancient idea of music in the heavens is preserved, another cause has been substituted. The music was formerly the work of the sirens; now it is the result of simple planetary motion. Now like causes in like circumstances should have like results, and if simple motion can produce music in the heavens, and if the test of audibility does not apply to it, then why should not simple motion have the same effect elsewhere in the physical universe and more particularly on the face of this earth? If motion is a cause of music, it becomes impossible to deny to all things that move, which is to say all things that exist, their own appropriate music-making. It is no longer possible to keep the music to the skies. The chamber music of the stars becomes the concerto grosso of the whole hierarchy of existence, manifesting itself with the utmost proximity and ubiquity. The faint exalted hymn of the sirens becomes a universal symphony, in which everything that walks, crawls, swims, flies or merely agitates is a frantic performer, living to music, by music and for music; for everything that lives moves, and everything that moves harps or sings. This hypothesis is the converse to an established fact. For it is an established fact of acoustics that all music is a kind of motion, and the hypothesis we are being led to frame is that all motion is a kind of music. The music is everywhere and there is nothing but music anywhere. All existence is motion; all motion is music: therefore all existence is music. To this triple identification the shade of Pythagoras beckons us on.

It is a matter for regret that Wordsworth was not more versed either in music or in philosophy than he was, for of all English poets since Milton he who could discern in "the soft inland murmur" of the Wye "the still sad music of humanity" was best fitted to find expression for the idea of a universal music in nature. He dimly perceived that everything in nature had about it some gratuitous intelligibility, of which science knew nothing. The nibbling sheep, the cloud drifting across the sky, the flower waving in the field, the orchard trees in blossom, everything was speaking, but in some fashion which he could not understand. The greatest beauty in nature lay in that it was peopled with lives that bore some cryptic message, yet because that message remained unread nature also inspired reverence and even fear. It did not come home to Wordsworth that this appealing quality of living things might be understood as something more than language, as an inborn music expounded in the very activity of living, and overwhelming man's religious feelings with a grand eulogy of the joy of existence. Had his intuition been deepened in this way, an even more notable poem than 'Tintern Abbey' might have been the result.

The Harmony of the Spheres, from which so much has been developed, has been described as the place where the science, the philosophy and the religion of Pythagoras meet, and it must duly be asked whether the Harmony of the Universe (as it now appears) is, in fact, a credible idea. At first it makes but a fanciful impression, yet there is considerable scientific as well as philosophic support for the view that analysis of the universe can go no deeper than in resolving it into one vast whorl of motion, which is everywhere the signature of existence. We know, moreover, that such sounds as we hear are but the effects of motion, and that outside the range of our hearing are numberless other "sounds" which we might hear if our ears were attuned differently than they are. Every movement must overcome some kind of friction and thereby cause some effect of sound, which would be perceptible to a sense of hearing suitably adapted to react to its frequencies. It is, therefore, not inherently unreasonable that the planets,

and after them the whole alphabet of creatures, cause by their motion some excitation which is potentially audible, and which can provisionally be called "sound".

Of course, all sound is not musical sound, yet the difference is not so clear as has been popularly supposed, and may prove to be a purely theoretical one. Supporters of the latest music still frequently remind us that what at first sounds to our ears as an unmistakable noise may on a longer acquaintance become lucid and harmonious, and this revision of judgment necessarily depends not on any change within the composition of the piece but on a change within our ears and minds. According to this view progress in music consists of a continual extension of its frontiers over the world of dissonance, and the logical outcome of such a view is that by a strenuous development of aural perception the whole world of noise can eventually be converted into a world of harmony. It is therefore possible to maintain that all motion is potentially audible, and furthermore that all such "sound" is latent music.

Despite the sweeping nature of these developments, the Pythagorean tradition in music is yet capable of another extension. For this we must go to the work of another poet, one of the greatest of these latter days. The singular quality of the work of Rainer Maria Rilke proceeded from his eccentric conviction that the proper study of mankind was God. Most of his works consist of experiments in finding the way to the knowledge of God, and human beings and their affairs are used in a way merely instrumental to this end. The conclusions of a man who was both a mystic and a literary genius are worthy of respect, and we find that in 'Sonnets to Orpheus', written towards the end of his life, Rilke was in a state of enthusiasm over what was to him a new and profound discovery. He had found that the God he had so long pursued, the God who had been so variously apprehended as a law-giver, a judge, an embodiment of power or of wisdom, a lover, was with an ultimate realism a God of Song, the primal musician exuberant with His own interior melody and communicating to every creature of His hands a motif that was a clue to the secret of His own consuming obsession. The title of these poems shows that Rilke recognized the root his thought had among the ancients. Their legendary Orpheus was a man who, by the sweet persuasion of his lyre, drew even the rivers, the trees and the mountains to follow after him, who was sometimes accorded the honours of a deity, and whose fame gave rise to the aristocratic cult of Orphism, of which Pythagoras himself was the most gifted and impressive representative. But the Orpheus of Rilke is the God of Christianity, both the creator and the saviour of the world, and it is in such a connection as this that Rilke discovers music to be not only the evidence of His outward action but the law of His inward being.

Thus in Rilke the Pythagorean tradition reaches its final limit and consummation. It was inevitable that it should in this way eventually embrace both the natural and the supernatural orders and subdue them both to music. The evidence of the artist's soul must lie in the artist's work, and the evidence of the Creator's self must lie in the world of his creation. If that creation appears to be a vortex of motion, and that vortex of motion converts into a fugue of musical sound, then one must either refuse to draw any conclusion at all or else conclude that the Creator is Himself a musician.

The hypothetical relation of created things to the Creator is summed up by Aquinas in the beautiful doctrine of Representative Assimilation. By this it is conceived that every creature bodies forth one of the attributes of God and thus possesses by its way of life some clue to God's nature.

Thus the way of a bird in the air, of a river in its course, of the deer on the green, of a ship in the sea or a man with a maid, are all types of motion which imitate some feature of the Creator's own nature; and we obtain a new view of this doctrine if we regard the characteristic action of every creature as a kind of song, inaudible certainly and imperfect perhaps, but to be heard somewhere and sometime, and having always its perfect counterpart laid up in the divine nature and manifesting the justice of the divine organism, while even here and now leaving literal possibilities of life becoming, in Kingsley's clumsy but not irrelevant phrase, "one grand, sweet song".

While what is essential in the Harmony of the Spheres is capable of no further development than this, it is desirable to find some common term between this enigmatic music of the universe as it thrives in its seasonal business and the human music which we have a better right to understand. Those who are steeped in the tradition of Pythagoras will see in our human music an attempt to create an image of the universal music or some aspect of it. In the way that a globe imitates the form of the earth and at the same time reduces it to the scope of our understanding, so human music-making creates a miniature universe in which audible tokens represent to our minds the typical movements which give life to the whole Creation. Such an exercise, by representing certain motions, inevitably calls to mind the creatures known to embody such motions. Thus it is that music, while parading a disarming vitality and comeliness of its own, impresses our minds with a sense of the important and insinuates into our imaginations a recollection of the experiences of life.

To dogmatize that music conveys a definite sense is to invite some spirited denials, but the literature of music, as well as the commonly-discovered attitude of composers and their publics, is very lenient to such an assumption. At least one composer, namely Debussy, wrote his finest music with the philosophy of music indicated in the previous paragraph clearly in his mind. Giving to that assumption, then, that broad sense which the sensitive believer gathers from his musical experiences, we may reach our point in declaring that music, that is human music, is the imaginative counterpart to all the forms of motion which inhabit nature and human existence. All motions are forms of life, and each instance either does or might find its counterpart in the symbolic sounds and stresses of music, which in like manner obey the laws of motion.

Nor is it that the mimetic power of music plays only around the outward side of nature. The invisible but potent motions of the human passions, involving their concomitant values in the field of ethics, and the characteristic progressions of the tragedies and comedies of the human spirit are perhaps to an even greater extent the playground of musical reflection. Thus music becomes a theatre in which the common thrills of existence are attractively realized, with a certain vagueness which is becoming to the subtlety of the element yet with a definiteness which troubles the imagination.

VERDI AND FRANCESCO FLORIMO

SOME UNPUBLISHED LETTERS

By FRANK WALKER

ALL in all, Verdi's relations with Naples cannot be said to have been very happy. His visits to the city numbered five, and on every occasion there was some source of dissatisfaction and irritation, material or artistic, which made his life there a torment. In his letters may be found his comments on the moral spinelessness of the inhabitants, the commercialism of the management of the San Carlo Theatre, the slackness and inefficiency of its musicians, the stranglehold of the censorship regulations and all the other deplorable features of the old Bourbon administration.

Verdi, however, found a few just men, and good friends and musicians, even in Naples. The fullest record of his relationship with the city is to be found in his correspondence with Cesare De Sanctis, published by Alessandro Luzio in his 'Carteggi Verdiani' and illustrated by the amusing caricatures of Melchiorre Delfico. De Sanctis seems to have been the central point of the circle of Verdi's Neapolitan friends. He was frequently the medium through which Verdi kept in touch with the others. Names that recur in this correspondence include those of the librettist of 'Luisa Miller' and 'Il Trovatore', Salvatore Cammarano (until his unexpected death in 1852), Vincenzo Torelli, editor of the 'Omnibus', the painter Domenico Morelli and Francesco Florimo, librarian of the Conservatorio.

Verdi's correspondence with Cammarano and Torelli is available in the 'Copialelettere' and elsewhere, that with Morelli was published by Primo Levi in his study of the artist. Supplementary material is included in Luzio's 'Carteggi Verdiani', and this includes some of the replies, preserved at Sant' Agata, to the letters to these Neapolitan friends. In a footnote on page 42 of the first volume however, Luzio records his failure to discover the whereabouts of Verdi's letters to Florimo and others, in spite of "insistent researches of courteous and erudite Parthenopeans".

It is curious that neither Luzio nor any of his erudite Neapolitan helpers seem to have thought of looking for Verdi's correspondence with Francesco Florimo in the place where the latter lived and moved and had his being—in the library of the Conservatorio of San Pietro a Maiella. Twenty bound volumes containing many hundreds of autograph letters from nineteenth-century musicians, a large percentage of them addressed to himself, were presented to this library by Florimo towards the end of his long life. Among them are to be found fifteen Verdi letters, of which only three are included in the 'Copialelettere'. I have to thank the present Director of the Conservatorio, Maestro Alessandro Longo, for permission to translate and publish these letters; to other officials of the library I am indebted for assistance in deciphering occasional obscurities.

Florimo, who was born on October 12th 1800, at S. Giorgio Morgeto, in Calabria, came to Naples at the age of sixteen to enter the Conservatorio of San Sebastiano. During his musical apprenticeship he formed a close friendship with Vincenzo Bellini, which endured until the latter's early death. Bellini's letters to Florimo (included in the volumes preserved in the Naples Conservatorio library) are one of the principal sources for that composer's biography. After the transfer of the Conservatorio

to its present site, in 1826, Florimo succeeded Giuseppe Sigismondi as librarian. A confirmed bachelor, for the rest of his working life he lived in a suite of rooms over the entrance, facing the first inner courtyard of the Conservatorio. All his energies were devoted to the development of the library, which became under his guidance one of the richest of Italy's musical treasures.

In Verdi's letters to De Sanctis, the librarian of San Pietro a Maiella is often referred to as "Lord Palmerston", "il temibile Lord", owing to a supposed resemblance to the English statesman, and owing, according to Luzio, also to his favoured position as teacher to English young ladies in Naples, and to the diplomatic skill with which he maintained at the same time his enthusiasm for Verdi's music and friendly relations with Verdi's Neapolitan rivals, Mercadante, Pacini and Petrella.

Alessandro Longo, who himself became a pupil, at the Conservatorio in 1877, has given in his reminiscences¹ a sketch of Florimo in his old age, still busying himself about his library, watching over his precious autographs and supervising the pupils' reading. We are told that he possessed an extensive wardrobe, with all manner of old-fashioned and unusual clothing, from a red Moorish fez to what sounds suspiciously like a pair of green Scots trews! The pupils, including Longo himself, found him helpful in the matter of small loans, when pocket-money was short.

Florimo's most important literary work is contained in the four volumes of his 'La scuola musicale di Napoli ed i suoi conservatori' (1880-1882) and in his memories of Bellini. He published an expurgated edition of some of his letters from Bellini, though it was not expurgated sufficiently for Verdi's liking. He also composed a Funeral Symphony—the manuscript of which is also in the Conservatorio library—on the death of Bellini, and many Neapolitan songs.

The earliest in date of Verdi's letters to Florimo was written at Mandres, near Paris, on September 9th 1854, when the composer was working on 'I vespri siciliani'. It is the letter mentioned in the post-script of the letter of the same date to De Sanctis: "Give this to Florimo and make my excuses for delaying so long."

Dear Florimo,

Mandres, September 9th 1854.

De Sanctis, who often remembers me, never forgets to send me your greetings and to tell me how many flattering things you say on my account. However much your praises may err from partiality, I must not be less grateful for the friendly sentiments by which they are prompted.

I know that cholera afflicts poor Naples and am glad that now it is drawing to an end. You will not be ignorant of the fact that in France too it did slaughter in several cities, notably in Marseilles and in Champagne. It has been present in Paris itself for ten or eleven months, and it seems that since a few days ago it has revived, and thus leaves us no hope of its disappearing so soon. Let us hope, however, that this will be the last time it will come to aggravate the evils of our epoch—already sufficiently great.

Only now am I putting the finishing touches to my opera, which I wish and hope to give as soon as possible, in order to breathe again the air of my country.

Kindly accept, dearest Florimo, my thanks for the remembrance and the esteem with which you honour me, and believe that they are repaid with interest by your affectionate friend

GIUSEPPE VERDI.

The following two letters concern Florimo's 'Cenno storico sulle scuole musicale di Napoli', afterwards elaborated into the four-volume work already mentioned. The first volume of the 'Cenno storico' came out in 1869.

Dear Florimo,

Sant' Agata, July 12th 1869.

It was an excellent idea of yours to write the musical history of the Neapolitan School, which really was one of our glories. No one could have done it better

¹ 'Il conservatorio di Napoli semant' anni fa', in 'San Pietro a Maiella, Bollettino del R. Conservatorio di Musica, Napoli', June 1908.

than you, who, in your capacity of Librarian of the present Conservatorio, had under your hands the documents necessary to form this book. It is worthy of very great praise, and if, here and there, are found tendencies a little bit biassed, that does honour to your heart and to the passionate love you bear your, or rather *our*, school.

With the most heartfelt thanks, I remain,

my dear Florimo,
GIUSEPPE VERDI.

Florimo seems to have replied, defending himself from the charge of bias, and reverting to the praise of his beloved Bellini. Verdi's next letter is full of interest for its revelations of orchestral practice in his day, and of conditions at the San Carlo Theatre in 1869. The visit to Vienna referred to must be that of 1843, for the production of 'Nabucco'.

Dear Florimo,

Sant' Agata, July 23rd 1869.

I hasten to tell you that you have misinterpreted what you call my critical observations. I am completely in agreement with you about the tributes you pay to the Defunct. If he lacked some of the brilliant qualities of some of his contemporaries he had much greater originality, and that note that renders him so dear to everyone and that in the temple of art places him in a niche where he stands alone. Praise to him, and very great praise!

I do not believe it will be possible to arrange to give 'La forza del destino' at Naples, because the Management, in spite of good will, will not be able to furnish the elements necessary to perform it well. Without speaking of the ill-adapted company (of singers), I should want your theatre (I speak to the artist, not to the Neapolitan) to adopt certain modifications, rendered indispensable by modern scores, first in the manner of production, then in the chorus, and perhaps in the orchestra itself. To give you an example, how can you still tolerate the violas and cellos not being all together? How can there thus be *attack*, *colour*, *accent*, etc., etc.? Besides that, the mass of the string instruments will lack body. This is a relic of times past, when violas and cellos played in unison with the basses. Execrable customs! And apropos of customs, I want to tell you about one. When I went to Vienna, seeing all the double-basses grouped together right in the middle of the orchestra, I (*accustomed* to seeing them scattered here and there) gave a great start of surprise and a certain little smile that would say: 'These pigs of Germans!' But when I descended into the orchestra and found myself before these double-basses, and heard their powerful *attack*, their *precision*, their *neatness*, their *piani* and their *forti*, etc., etc.—I perceived that I was the *todero*, and I stopped smiling. From this you will understand my ideas about how the violas and cellos should be placed, which play such important parts in modern works. They will have laughed heartily there when, for 'Simon Boccanegra', I reunited those instruments!—So much the worse for those who laughed! And so much the worse if they haven't followed my advice.

I am, however, sorry that all this deprives us of the pleasure of seeing each other in Naples.—Oh, the fine evenings that we should have passed together! Peppina wanted to scratch me on reading your letter. I shall not again forget to greet you in her name. I do it now for this time and for the last.

I too remain yours,

GIUSEPPE VERDI.

Florimo's reply, of July 30th, is printed in the 'Carteggi Verdiani', Vol. I, p. 307.

Another group of letters centres round the attempt to persuade Verdi to succeed Mercadante as director of the Naples Conservatorio. A copy of the original petition from a group of musicians and amateurs of the city is included among Florimo's papers. The stilted language hardly merits complete transcription. Dated from Naples on December 21st 1870, it implores the illustrious maestro, "the last link in the musical chain commenced by Scarlatti", to overcome his natural reluctance to disturb his tranquil life, already full of honours and glory, by means of his immense love for art, and to repair the losses that art had suffered through the deaths of Bellini and Donizetti by rearing up a new generation of elect artists in the great tradition.

There is little doubt that Florimo himself was the moving spirit behind this mistaken enterprise.

² "Toderi di Tedeschi!", literally "These German squids!"

Probably while the petition was still in the post Verdi received notice of its purport from Florimo and despatched at once a hasty reply.

My dear Florimo,

Genoa, December 27th 1870.

Your letter, redirected to me from Busseto, reaches me at this moment. I hurry to reply at once in two words, to tell you that, to my very great sorrow, I could not accept the directorship of your Conservatorio. With more leisure I will tell you the thousands and thousands of reasons for it, but meanwhile prevent, if you can, the sending of a formal invitation, because I should be exceedingly sorry to have to reply with a refusal. Heaven knows if I love our art, and if I would like to be useful if I could to your College, but . . . I will write to you again to-morrow, or later. Meanwhile, a hurried goodbye, goodbye, goodbye.

Yours affectionately,

GIUSEPPE VERDI.

The 'Carteggi Verdiani' (Vol. I, p. 308.) give Florimo's reply to this—a further impassioned plea, in the name of Art with a capital A, for Verdi to reconsider his decision and undertake the direction of the Conservatorio :

Your letter received yesterday has put desperation in my heart. I hoped that in homage to that Art that renders you so great you would have accepted the direction of this her sanctuary. Believe me, dear Master, it is the voice of the people that calls you and acclaims you a worthy successor of Zingarelli, the only one who can give back its old glory to this ancient institution.

He gives details of the emoluments to be expected—7,000 lire a year—which seems little enough—plus 80 to 100 lire a month for an honorary post at the *Reale Accademia di Scienze e Belle Arti*. In addition to the regular summer holiday of forty days in September or October, Verdi would have been at liberty to go where he pleased for months at a time, leaving an assistant in charge at Naples.

The petition was already despatched, and could not be withdrawn. Verdi's replies, private and official, with the definite rejection of the scheme, are included in the 'Copialelettere' (pp. 231–233.) For the sake of completeness, and as they are not given in any of the current English biographies, I reprint them here.

Dear Florimo,

Genoa, January 4th 1871.

I have a home, interests and fortune in these parts. How could I abandon everything and come to settle myself at Naples? I know quite well that I should have plenty of liberty to go away when I wished, but I should not wish it. You all say that your Conservatorio is in need of reform. I don't want to know if this is true, but I do know that I should require (and I should require firmly) the studies to be performed in my way, and to succeed in this application and continual surveillance would be necessary. On this subject I shall necessarily enlarge a little in the letter that I will send you to-morrow, in reply to the address that the professors send me. That address, if it has flattered my self-esteem, has also left in my heart very great sorrow that I cannot accept. Thank your colleagues and tell them that my sincerest wish is that you may find a man who can worthily fill that position. It doesn't matter if he is famous or not. It suffices that he should be learned, without being too much of a pedant. Do not doubt it: the pupil, if he has genius and is initiated properly into the mysteries of the art, will achieve also that which the master will not have been able to teach him.

Farewell, my dear Florimo. My wife sends you a thousand good wishes; I press your hand affectionately. Farewell.

GIUSEPPE VERDI.

The official reply, dated January 4th in the 'Copialelettere', like the letter above, was not actually written until a day later. The autograph differs in a few unimportant particulars from the draft in the 'Copialelettere'.

Dear Florimo,

Genoa, January 5th 1871.

If there is anything that could flatter my self-esteem, it is this invitation to become director of the Naples Conservatorio which, through you, the teachers of the said Conservatorio and the many musicians of your city send me.

It is really painful to me not to be able to reply as I should like to this confidence, but with my occupations, with my habits, with my love of an independent life,

it would be impossible to take upon myself such an important engagement. You will say to me: "And Art?"—Well, I have done as much as I have been able, and if, from time to time, I am still able to do something more, it is necessary that I should be free from any other preoccupation whatsoever. If that were not so, imagine how proud I should be to occupy the position where sat the founders of a school—A. Scarlatti, and then Durante and Leo. I should have made it my pride (nor, at this time, would it have been a backward step) to train the pupils in the grave and severe studies of those early Fathers.

I should have wished to put, so to speak, one foot on the past and the other on the present and on the future (for I am not afraid of the Music of the Future); I should have said to the young pupils: "Train yourselves constantly in *fugue*, tenaciously, to the point of satiety, and until your hands have become bold and strong to bend the notes to your will. Learn to compose thus with assurance, to dispose the parts well and to modulate without mannerisms. Study Palestrina and a few of his contemporaries. Afterwards jump to Marcello and fix your attention on his recitatives. Attend a few performances of modern works, without allowing yourselves to be bewitched either by their many beauties, harmonic and instrumental, or by the chord of the *diminished seventh*, the rock and refuge of us all, who do not know how to compose four bars without half-a-dozen of these *sevenths*."

These studies completed [united to wide literary culture], I should finally say to the young: "Now put your hand on your heart, write, and (given artistic disposition) you will be composers. In any case do not swell the multitude of imitators and decadents of our epoch, who seek and seek and (sometimes doing well) never find." In the teaching of singing, too, I should have required studies of the old, in conjunction with modern declamation.

To put these few maxims into practice it would have been necessary to watch over the teaching with such assiduity that, so to speak, the twelve months of the year would have been too few. I, who have home, interests, fortune—everything, everything here, I ask you yourself: "How could I do it?"

Therefore, my dear Florimo, kindly act as interpreter to your colleagues, and to the many musicians of your beautiful Naples, of my very great sorrow that I cannot accept this invitation, that is such an honour for me. I wish you may find a man above all learned and severe in study. Licence and errors in counterpoint may be admitted and are even beautiful sometimes in the theatre; in a Conservatorio, no. Turn back again to the old, and it will be a step forward.⁴

Goodbye, goodbye, believe me always

yours affectionately,

GIUSEPPE VERDI.

Even on the receipt of this letter Florimo did not yet despair. He wrote to Verdi again on January 7th revealing, at length, the real reason for the anxiety of himself and his friends as to the fate of the Conservatorio. Unless Verdi could be persuaded to take on its direction, the probability was that the post would fall to one not only not learned, as Verdi had hoped, but "ignorant, without a head, even, who has made himself known only as a maker of motives. . . . With such a director the college of Naples is certainly ruined, beyond hope of restoration." Florimo dared to suggest that if this did come to pass Verdi would feel remorse for not having saved the old and glorious institution when it was in his power to do so.

The following important Verdi letter is not as well known as it deserves to be. It has been published, incompletely and inaccurately, in various periodicals,⁵ and there is a quotation from it in Gatti's biography (Vol. I, p. 68), probably taken from one of these articles.

Dearest Florimo,

Genoa, January 9th 1871.

I am most sensible of this new proof of esteem that the Professors of your College give me, in replying in the 'Gazzetta di Napoli' to the article in 'L'Arte', but rest assured that I do not attach any importance to that sort of article. I should

² The words "uniti a larga cultura letteraria" do not appear in the autograph. They were added at Verdi's request when the letter was published in the newspapers and magazines of the time. See the letter to De Sanctis of January 13th 1871 ('Carteggi Verdiani', Vol. I, p. 128).

⁴ The famous and much discussed phrase: "Torniamo all'antico: sarà un progresso", in the 'Copialettere', became "Tornate all'antico e sarà un progresso" in the autograph letter.

⁵ By Rocca Pagliara, in 'Verdi e la scuola napoletana', in the 'Giornale d'Italia', February 2nd 1914, and in 'L'Indice', (Naples) at about the same time, by Giuseppe De Napoli in 'Il maestro di Giuseppe Verdi' ('La Lettura', February 1928), and by Mario Baccaro in the 'Giornale d'Italia', January 26th 1941. All these writers omit the first paragraph and the postscript, although Pagliara and Baccaro claim to publish the letter "exactly" and "in its integrity".

however be curious to know if the *Sicilian* aspirant is Platania? I will tell you later my reasons for wishing to know.

I have seen on other occasions that you knew that Lavigna was my master. And do you know who Lavigna was? Lavigna was a pupil of Fenaroli, who as an extremely old man still gave lessons in the College of . . . (I no longer know which), but at the same time Lavigna took private lessons from Valente. Valente's is a name little known to us, but you others (i.e. southern Italians) should know him well. Lavigna had a very high opinion of him, and if one may judge from five or six original fugues that Lavigna preserved, and by many fugue subjects that have served also for my own studies, Valente was a contrapuntist very much more assured and profound than Fenaroli. Lavigna was taken (I believe in 1801) to Milan by Paisiello, who was going to Paris for I don't know what purpose. Recommended by Paisiello, he wrote an opera for La Scala and settled down as *maestro concertatore* at that theatre, where he remained until 1832. In this year I knew him, and studied counterpoint under his direction until 1835. Lavigna was very strong in counterpoint, a bit of a pedant, and had no use for any other music than that of Paisiello. I remember that in a *Sinfonia* that I wrote, he corrected all the scoring in the manner of Paisiello. "I should be in a fine situation", I said to myself—and from that moment I did not show him anything more of ideal composition, and in the three years spent with him I did not do anything but canons and fugues, fugues and canons of all sorts. No one taught me orchestration and how to treat dramatic music.

There you are, that's who Lavigna was.

I add that he wrote seven or eight operas for Milan and Turin, with varied fortune. I repeat: he was learned, and I wish all teachers were like him.

These notes would have been useful to you, perhaps, a year ago, but now—goodbye, goodbye, believe me,

yours affectionately.

GIUSEPPE VERDI.

PS. By the second post I receive yours of the 7th, and it grieves me very much. But if you fear that the appointment may fall to the fabricator of *motives*, who would hopelessly ruin your College, why not seek to avert the blow by promoting a competition? A *competition* for such a post? Well, why not?

In thanking Verdi for his reminiscences of Lavigna, Florimo said he would make use of them in a later edition of his 'History of the Neapolitan School', but he never did so.

It seems that there was a keen discussion going on in the Neapolitan press about the appointment of a new director for the Conservatorio. Unfortunately I have not been able to trace files of either of the papers concerned, 'L'Arte' or the 'Gazzetta di Napoli', for this year, in the libraries of Naples or Rome. Florimo's next letter gives the names of all those who aspired to the post which Verdi rejected—Platania, Petrella, Serrao, De Giosa, Staffa Barone, Lauro Rossi, Mazzucato, Bazzini, Bottesini, Costa and D'Arcais. The "fabricator of motives" was Enrico Petrella, an operatic composer of very little talent and a man of enormous vanity. Verdi disliked him and despised him as a musician. Florimo told Verdi:

The *Sicilian* aspirant, the candidate of the paper 'L'Arte', is Petrella. Born at Palermo in 1812, he was brought to Naples by his father at the age of ten. Entered in this College, he was a pupil of Zingarelli's. His father's intrigues procured him a contract with the little *Teatro della Fenice* here, and as he had not finished his studies Zingarelli opposed it, but, tenacious in his proposal to write the opera, he (Petrella) preferred to leave the College rather than follow the advice of the old master. That's why he is a fabricator of motives.

The directorship of the Naples Conservatorio finally went to Lauro Rossi.

In another highly characteristic unpublished letter, scribbled in the utmost haste, Verdi has a bad-tempered outburst against the English, who seem to have pestered him for autographs as a result of the publicity given to his letter renouncing the directorship of the Naples Conservatorio.

Dear Florimo,

Sant' Agata, April 30th 1871.

It seems really as if the English have got it in their heads that I must live in Naples. I am sorry that the annoyance of these letters falls to you, but the fault is a little bit yours, too. If you had not sent me that well-known address, the English

would have continued to send me their requests for autographs, as in the past, to *Italy*. However, I give you thanks for the first letter, thanks for the second, thanks for the others that will follow, if they do follow, thanks for your book on the Naples Conservatorio, thanks for the biography of Bellini, most interesting, thanks for all the rest.

About myself I cannot say anything else except that I have been a week at St. Agata and that I seem to have forgotten music, or at least it seems to me like a dream, like a memory of fifty years ago. Blessed and cursed music! To which perhaps I owe much, but which also torments me not a little.

Forgive me this scribble and the haste in which I write. I have so much to do! If it were only a question of writing an opera something might be done, but it is a matter of quite a different sort!

Goodbye, goodbye. Peppina greets you. Goodbye, goodbye.

Yours affectionately,

GIUSEPPE VERDI.

The remaining letters concern various publications of Florimo's, sent to Verdi at different times, and the loan or gift of copies of works by Porpora, Pergolesi and Scarlatti from the Conservatorio library.

Dear Florimo,

Sant' Agata, September 7th 1872.

I have delayed a day or two before responding to your most agreeable and beautiful letter, because I hoped to be able to have time to read and to say something to you about your work. But as yet I have lacked the time and I do not wish to delay further saying at least "a thousand thanks, my dear Florimo." Until later!

We shall see each other soon, it is sure, but I don't know whether, having to do with that theatre of yours, which really (don't take it badly) progresses a little obliquely, I shall have the heart to be very merry. Let us hope for the best. Meanwhile I greet you in Peppina's name and I heartily shake you by both hands.

Affectionately,

GIUSEPPE VERDI.

The latter part of the above letter refers to what was to be Verdi's last visit to Naples. He went there early in November to produce 'Don Carlo' and 'Aida' at the San Carlo Theatre. 'Don Carlo' was performed in December, but 'Aida' was delayed owing to the illness of the soprano, Teresa Stolz. During this period of enforced idleness, early in 1873, Verdi composed his string Quartet. Four years later Florimo was able to secure, with Giuseppina's help, the manuscript of this work for the Conservatorio library.

Dear Florimo,

Sant' Agata, June 23rd 1873.

Where are you now? In Naples, travelling, or in *Tedescheria* [Germany]? In any case this letter will follow you everywhere, to tell you that I have received the cantatas by Porpora and the 'Salve Regina' by Pergolesi, and that I await with impatience the Scarlatti cantatas.

Thanks therefore for the annoyance that I have given you, and for those very numerous ones I shall give you in the future. You will say perhaps that I *abuse your kindness*. Well, say it if you like, as long as you don't grow weary sometime or another and end by sending me to—!

Peppina is very much better, is almost well, and greets you heartily.

We shall leave for Paris on Wednesday, perhaps. Write to me thus—*Poste Restante*.

Bon voyage. Amuse yourself well. Farewell.

GIUSEPPE VERDI.

Dear Florimo,

May 5th 1881.

"You are going mad", a Neapolitan would say. *I?* I give judgment on this, your work? !!!!!!!

You well know what I wrote to you the last time, about judgments in general and mine in particular. Well then! You would be capable of printing my *friendly reproof*, if I made it to you.

It is true that in this work you show your principal weaknesses for a Roman and for a Lombard, but, in any case,

a judgment—no.

a *bravo* to you—yes.

Thanks and greetings,

yours affectionately,

GIUSEPPE VERDI.

PS. Peppina sends best wishes

The following brief note is included in the 'Copialettere'. Verdi was growing tired of seeing his "Tornate all' antico" letter in print.

Dear Florimo,

Genoa, March 12th 1883.

I read at this moment in Ricordi's 'Gazzetta Musicale' that at the beginning of April a book of yours will come out, in which will also be published "a programme-letter from Giuseppe Verdi to Florimo, regarding the Neapolitan Conservatorio, etc."

You know that I have never loved publicity. It is to me now tiresome and almost irritating. I should be very grateful if you could leave blank the place of that letter: if you cannot, have the goodness to add a note to your book making plain my wishes.

Keep well and believe me always

Yours, GIUSEPPE VERDI.

Dear Florimo,

Genoa, March 15th 1883.

I have received your letter.

You are perhaps right; and perhaps I am right too, seeking to avoid anything that may give rise to polemics, to discussions, which are useless at this moment. I leave to you ample, the amplest, power to do what you believe useful to our art. *Amen.*

Keep well and in good heart for another hundred years. Peppina thanks you and greets you and I warmly shake your hand.

Yours, GIUSEPPE VERDI.

Dearest Florimo,

Genoa, December 24th 1885.

Magnificent!

I have put it in the shop-window in sign of admiration!

Joking apart, why always put yourself out in that way? Truly an obstinate sinner! If I cannot absolve you, nevertheless I send you my thanks, together with those of Peppina, who, with me, wishes you another twenty years of old age. You see that I do not exaggerate, nor overpraise!

Goodbye, and wish well to your

GIUSEPPE VERDI.

The last of this little batch of letters bears no date. It shows Verdi occupied in finding some little present to satisfy the sweet tooth of his old friend.

Dear Florimo,

I have searched, and had search made, in all the archives of the city, to know which and what were the *ciambelle* [a kind of biscuit] that the old Doges of Genoa used to eat. Alas! less fortunate than you, who found a delicacy of the Magni Greci, I have found nothing but *corni ducali* ["ducal horns", a kind of sweet].

It is no longer the season for horns, and I send you a little box of candied fruits, very modern ones of Romanengo, that have an excellent reputation.

Yours, GIUSEPPE VERDI.

Florimo died on December 18th 1888, at the ripe old age of eighty-eight. A year before he had presented his collection of autograph letters to the Conservatorio library. "I do so gladly," the inscription reads, on the inside cover of these volumes, "hoping that it will not appear an act of senile vanity." This was perhaps a reference to the disapproving remarks, from some quarters, that had greeted the publication, a few years before, of some of the letters he had received from Bellini. Verdi himself, in letters to other friends, showed that he shared this disapproval. Nevertheless, Florimo was of course right. The Bellini letters are of the first importance for the study of that composer. Even this little group of Verdi letters contains things that are too good to be lost—those fragments of autobiography, for instance, about his studies with Lavigna and his first encounter with the Viennese orchestra. In addition, there are in the Florimo collection hundreds and hundreds of letters from other composers, conductors and singers of the nineteenth century⁶—Donizetti, Paganini, Paer, Mercadante, Wagner, Boito, Joachim and many others. There is assuredly much treasure still to be recovered from this source, by someone with the requisite knowledge and ability to decipher Italian manuscripts, and good eyesight and patience and leisure.

⁶ And not only of the nineteenth century. I was amazed to find, in one of these volumes of 'Letters to Florimo', a long, four-page autograph letter of Monteverdi, in a perfect state of preservation. It is addressed to the Marchese Bentivoglio and clearly dated September 10th 1617. This letter is printed in Malipiero's collection of Monteverdi's writings ten years out of place, under the date September 10th 1627.

THE CHAPEL ROYAL OF SCOTLAND AT HOLYROODHOUSE

BY HILDA S. P. HUTCHISON

THE House of Stewart, Scotland's royal line, was romantically ill-starred. Many of its members were unfortunate, and many were also musical. James I was reported to be a skilled performer on an amazing number of instruments. James III founded the Chapel Royal at Stirling. Under his son, James IV, music flourished in the kingdom as it had never done before. James V is said to have been "Ane gude musitian himselffe, with ane singular gude ear . . . but his voice rawky and harske". In the time of his daughter, Queen Mary, the Chapel Royal was still at Stirling, and here her son James (afterwards James I of England) was baptized. When the "fiery besom" of the Reformers swept the land, the Chapel Royal was not molested by the mob, but the military governor of Stirling Castle, the Earl of Mar, thought it his duty to purge it of all ornaments savouring of "popish idolatry", and thereafter the Chapel Royal of Stirling seems to fall out of history.

After the Golden age of James IV a period of cultural decay had set in and later various efforts were made to improve matters. Thus we find an Act of Parliament of 1579 enjoining upon the burghs the restoration of the "Sang Schools", once flourishing centres of musical education, but now sadly fallen.

In 1606 James VI (I of England) seems actually to have proposed to assign the Chapel Royal emoluments—or what was left of them—to his "chamber child", John Gib, a man with no musical office whatever. Parliament protested in a sensibly worded Act, showing that public opinion in post-Reformation Scotland was not so hostile to the arts as some would suppose.

The Act mentions the foundation of the Chapel Royal in former times, and its present decay, which "will breed derogation to the honour of the realm, quhilk onlie, among all Christian kingdoms, will want that civill and commendable provision of ordinar musick for recreation and honour of their princes". It then forbids the alienation of the rightful revenues and enjoins their restitution to the Chapel, so that, by his Majesty's example, youth may be encouraged to prosecute the study of music, "that liberall science quhilk quickens the ingyne, gives plesant and harmless recreation to all Estaitis, and estaitis of persons, and is ane holy exercise, agreeable to religioun, and commanded of God for giving of thanks and praise to his Holy Majesty". So, in 1612, we find the revenues which were refused to John Gib assigned to "Mr. William Birnie, Minister of Ayr, as Dean and Master of the Chapel Royal. The "Instrument of Gift" entrusts him "with speciall power to chuse, nominate, and elect ane sufficient number of prebendares skilful in musick . . . to serve in the particular charge and service of the said Chapel Royal. It goes on to say that, because his Majesty will now reside in Edinburgh when in Scotland (And that it is expedient the chapell be erectit in the maist conspicuous place), it will be placed, not at Stirling, as heretofore, but in Edinburgh, in the palace of Holyroodhouse. The title "Chapel Royal of Scotland" is now officially used.

The Abbey Church of Holyrood, as is well known, still stands, a roofless yet beautiful ruin, beside the palace. Founded by David I,

burnt more than once by the English, rebuilt by James IV, its nave, in 1569, had been repaired to form a church for the parishioners of the Canongate district in which Holyroodhouse stands. With the transference of the Chapel Royal from Stirling, then, we naturally expect to find it housed in this Abbey church; but no, James IV preferred to take, as his Chapel Royal, a small chamber on the south of the palace, which his mother had used as her private chapel. Here, Sir James Melville states, her marriage to Darnley had taken place, although the banns had been published in the Abbey Kirk. This small building is no longer extant. Mr. Birnie did not long enjoy his office, for, in 1615, the Deanery of the Chapel Royal was united to the Bishopric of Galloway, upon which Bishop Cowper became Dean.

After the union of the crowns in 1603 James paid only one visit to his northern kingdom, in 1617. In preparation for this event skilled workmen were sent to renovate the Chapel Royal. Although the rest of the kingdom might maintain Presbyterianism, in this, his own chapel, James was determined to have an office after his own heart, and after the English manner. We can imagine how this sojourn in England had given him a desire for the dignity and grandeur which he would find in an English cathedral. He ordered the installation of an altar, stalls for choristers and various carved figures of the Apostles. These last aroused a storm of protest. It was rumoured that "the Mass would surely follow the setting up of images". Bishop Cowper remonstrated with the king "on the affixing of the portraits". The king replied indignantly, but consented to delay, not, he said, because the bishop was right, but because, in any case, the work required more time. Bishop Cowper wrote thus caustically to his friend, Mr. Patrick Simson:

Concerning images, we have gotten them all changed, upon a letter we wrote subscribed by the Bishops, Mr. Patrick Galloway, and Mr. John Hall. But yet with sharp rebuke and check of ignorance, both from his Maestie and Canterburie, calling our skarring at them *scandalum acceptum sed non datum*. We bear the reprove the more patientlie because we have obtained that which we craved.

Calderwood remarks in his history of the Kirk of Scotland that, on September 16th 1616 the sea was specially high at Leith, which the people took for an evil portent. "In October", he says, "manie craftsmen were sett on worke to repair the king's houses, speciallie the Abbey of Halvudhous, and the Chappell Royall. About the midst of this moneth the organs which were to be sett up in the Chappell Royall were brought to Leith".

This remark, from an English traveller who accompanied the king to Scotland, shows the popular feeling aroused:

The skipper that brought the singing men with their papistical vestments complains that he hath been much troubled with a strange singing in his head ever since he came aboard his ship; for remedy whereof the parson of the parish hath persuaded him to sell that profane vessel and to distribute the money among the faithful brethren.

Calderwood says: "Upon Satturday, the 17th of May [*i.e.* 1617] the English service was begunne in the Chappell Royall, with singing of quiristours, surplices, and playing on organs".

James arrived in May and, next day, heard choral service in the chapel. Before leaving Scotland, on Laud's advice, he ordered musical service to be held daily in the now renovated chapel. This was not done, however. Only one baptism took place in the following August, of which Bishop Cowper reports thus:

Most gracious and sacred Soverane, Please your Hienes, I have as yet done no service in the chappell, except the baptism of John Murray his sonne, where the organes and musitians, four on everie part, men and boyes agreit in pleasant

harmonie to the contentment of all, because they understood what was song. The organes has bene too commonlie visited; the organist shew me that the spakes that raises the bellows had bene somewhat unskillfullie usit by ignorant people. I shew it to my Lord Chancellor, who has commandit to kepe them more carefully, yet the mice and dust of the hous will do them evil, if convenient coverings be not provydit in tyme. For this your Maiestie will be pleased to give directions to the Thesawrar . . . as also for the intertenment of the organist who can both make and mend and play upon them in ordour.

In 1621 the Deanery of the Chapel Royal was separated from the Bishopric of Galloway, the latter being considered too remote, and united with that of Dunblane. Bishop Adam Bellenden thus became dean. He reported to the king that the state of the chapel was not what it had once been, and asked for the assignment of special revenues to revive it. The king was willing to comply, but his counsellors were not, foreseeing possible troubles ahead. James died, however, in 1625, and next year we find a letter from his heir, Charles I, saying that the best way to help the chapel was, not to assign to it revenues taken from other objects, but rather to examine the *old* foundations and find out the cause of the stoppage of its legitimate payments, which had lapsed in the course of years.

Under so obstinate a High Churchman as Charles I we find the Chapel Royal of Scotland again an object of suspicion to the Scots people. In 1624 one Edward Kellie was appointed director of music. It was not until 1633 that Charles's official coronation in Scotland took place. In preparation for this event we have a valuable letter from Kellie to the king. He has installed in the Chapel Royal, he says, "One organ, two flutes, two pandores, with viols and other instruments, with all sorts of English, French, Dutch, Spanish, Latin, Italian and old Scotch music". Practice, he states, takes place twice a week.

There is sung before sermon ane full anthyme, and after sermon ane anthyme alone in versus with the organ. I caused make twelve great books, gilded, and twelve small ones, with an organ book wherein I caused write the said psalms, services, and anthymes, and attended the writing thereof five months in London. Hereupon I carried home an organist, and two men for playing on cornets and sackbuts, and two boys for singing division in the versus, all of which are most exquisite in their several faculties. I caused the said organist examine all the aforesaid musicbooks, and organbooks; and finding them right, convenit all the musicians of your Majesty's said chapel, some whereof, (being after trial found insufficient for such service), I deposed, and choosed others in their rooms, whereby I made up the number of 16 men besides the organist and 6 boys.

"Charles I", says Balfour the historian, "had seven musicians in his train on his arrival in Scotland in 1633, and six trumpeters". He attended service in the Chapel Royal the day after his arrival, but the actual coronation service took place in the Abbey Kirk. Doubtless Kellie was responsible for the musical arrangements. The Bishop of Brechin officiated. Spalding, in his account, is exercised over the "prelactical innovations", such as the "white rochets and white sleevis and koopis of gold, having blew silk to their foot". He mentions the embroidered crucifix at the back of the altar: "And as the bishops who were in service passed by this crucifix they were seen to bow their knee, and bek, which, with their habits, was notit, and bred gret fear of inbringing of popery, for the quhilk they were all deposit, as is set down in their papers".

In 1634 we find Kellie replaced by Edward Millar. It was he who, on Laud's instigation, prepared the musical part of the famous psalter of 1635, and here, at last, we can point to a piece of actual music yet existing. It is a finely printed work, interesting as being the first psalter published in Scotland with harmonized tunes. William Saunders, in the 'Transactions of the Scottish Ecclesiological Society', remarks

of this book that it shows clearly the high-church or chapel-royal influence behind it. He thinks that Laud, a good musician himself, must have rejoiced over such excellent work.

Sir Richard Terry says of this psalter :

... That now neglected book is in certain respects a very great work. But one cannot help saying that its contents show a marked decline in contrapuntal skill. The Psalter is divided into three sections. First come the "Common Tunes", which could be used to any words that were in ballad metre. Lastly comes the Psalter proper, with the "Proper tunes" to which the psalms were sung. Between these two divisions come the "Psalms in Reports". These psalms in reports are nothing more than short motets with the melody of some "proper psalm" as *canto fermo*. As these motets have no words the modern student may well inquire how on earth they were to be sung. The explanation would seem to be this. The professional choirmen of the Pre-Reformation period guarded the mysteries of their craft as jealously as any other medieval guild. They knew all about the intricacies of text-underlaying. So, when the disciples of John Knox compiled their Psalter (skilled singing having been almost banished from public worship) they came forward with a sop to the old singers, and offered them the "Psalms in Reports", where they could exercise their skill, and show that they knew something which the new singers did not—a distinctly pawky piece of Scottish humour which seems to prove (as I have several times said in print) that Knox's disciples were not such "dour bodies" as is popularly supposed.

Laud appointed Bishop Wedderburn to succeed Bellenden as dean, possibly hoping to find in him a compliant tool in his efforts to force episcopacy upon an unwilling people. Yet it is curious that, when the new service book was ordered to be read in the Edinburgh churches on that memorable Sunday when Jenny Geddes took the floor, the Chapel Royal was not included in the list. That a riot ensued is too well known to need narrating. It led to a stern edict, threatening death to all who opposed the service book. The nation rose in revolt; hundreds signed the National Covenant in Greyfriars Churchyard; the Covenanters were ready to meet the king, but the Pacification of Berwick followed, with permission to hold a General Assembly. This Assembly overthrew episcopacy (and the service book) in Scotland. Charles had ordered the Edinburgh Town Council to attend service in the Chapel Royal on Sundays and holy days. Yet, when he revisited Scotland after Laud's downfall in 1641, we find him forced to accept as his chaplain Mr. Thomas Henderson, leader of opposition to the service book and mover in the drawing-up of the National Covenant, surely a malicious triumph on the part of the Kirk!

One week after Charles's death, moreover, we find Parliament granting powers to the Treasury Commissioners to remove the Chapel Royal organs! During the occupation of Cromwell's soldiery Holyroodhouse was partly burnt. Possibly the Chapel Royal suffered. Certainly we find Charles II proposing a more daring innovation than any of his forbears. The Abbey Church was no longer to accommodate the Canon-gate parishioners, but was to be made into his own place of worship. He actually succeeded in carrying an Act through Parliament declaring the Abbey Church to be "Crown property and Chapel Royal in all tymes coming". His royal visit was to be the signal for the new order of things. However strongly the citizens may have disliked this proposal, no open rebellion was shown. Scotland always had a wonderfully soft spot where the Merry Monarch was concerned. His visit was put off and eventually never took place. The Canon-gate parishioners remained in undisturbed possession of their church, and a clash was avoided, for the time.

James II, a more convinced Romanist than his brother, proceeded with a purposeful subtlety which makes interesting reading. He began by proposing to restore the *small* chapel, but his real aim (to convert the

Abbey Church to his own use) became more and more apparent. He had two friends in Scotland, the Lord Chancellor (the Earl of Perth) and his brother, Lord Melfort. With their help he arranged for the church redecoration, securing from the Privy Council "Bills of Exchange," a cunning expedient to cloak the real objects of his expenditure.

Rogers, in his invaluable 'History of the Chapel Royal' gives some interesting contemporary extracts from the pen of the very Protestant Lord Fountainhall, which show the march of events. Lord Perth, he states, in 1685 received eight thousand pounds from the king to buy "altars, candlesticks, priests' garments, and other ornaments and popish gauds for erecting the chappell in the Abbey, and brought them home, and, although there be acts of Parliament for seizing such trash, yet our customers passed them".

In 1686 we read, again from his pen: "The King's yaught arrived from London at Leith with the popish altar, vestments, images, priests, and other dependers for the popish chapel in the Abbey". The Edinburgh mob burnt the Pope in effigy, but the Town Council remained silent.

One hundred pounds was demanded from the Privy Council for a musical service, and a Romanist almoner appointed. (All this *ostensibly* for the restoration of the small chapel.) Then James, to placate public opinion, announced that he meant to found an Order of Chivalry, the Knights of the Thistle, and constitute the Abbey Church their chapel. Lord Melfort drew up a wonderful document in Latin as warrant for this foundation. In May the warrant and statutes were published, and in June eight knights were created members. Having thus prepared the ground, James wrote his historic letter to the Privy Council. This letter expressed his desire

That the Abbey Church be recovered from the Magistrates of Edinburgh not only as being most fit and convenient for accommodating the Knights of the Thistle, but also most proper for the performance of religious worship and exercise of our household when we shall have occasion to be there, our present chapel in the palace not being large enough for that same.

The Provost was ordered to give up the keys. Fountainhall records that this letter was received by "A long silence". Then the Archbishop of Glasgow spoke up. He declared that the church was a mensal and patrimonial church of the Bishopric of Edinburgh, and that it was not in the Provost's power to deliver the keys. "However", says the disgruntled Fountainhall,

it was adjusted that the keys should immediately be delivered to the Chancellor himself; and the inhabitants of the Canongate [whose parochial church it was not of old, before the Reformation, but belonged to the convent there] were ordained to go to My Lady Yester's church, and the French minister and congregation were put out of it to the High School, or Common Hall. So this is the first Protestant church taken away from us.

Whatever the private views of the Privy Council may have been, there was no open opposition. The daily Romanist worship was sanctioned. Lord Fountainhall writes, in February 1688: "In the evening and next morning many litanies and masses are said in the Abbey by the popish priests for the soul of King Charles II, to bring him out of purgatory, he having died on that day now three years ago".

King James had got his way with the Privy Council. It remained for the mob of Edinburgh to bring his cherished plans to frustration. It need not be imagined, of course, that the king's "popish work" at Holyroodhouse had passed unnoticed by the ordinary citizens. Indeed wild rumours had passed from mouth to mouth, and lost nothing in the

passing ; talk had been rife of the splendid organ and marble floor, the stalls for the knights ; the curious " timber work " for the canopy ; the statues of the Saviour, the Twelve Apostles and other sculpture. Upon these last, the " popish images ", the imagination of the Edinburgh people had concentrated with a fearful fascination. In sinister patience the mob bided its time, listening, marking and digesting ; waiting until the work was complete in all its shining newness, only then to march down the High Street, intent upon purging their city of this " devil's work " in its midst !

The insurrection which broke out had been feared for some time, and a guard, under a certain Captain John Wallace, had been stationed in the palace. A Scottish minister gives an account of what happened. " Certain youths ", he says, headed the procession :

At the Canongate Cross they took down the Earl of Perth's picture and carried it with them to the Abbey. There Captain Wallace advanced with some soldiers beyond the Strand. Whereupon they stopped and sent to demand access to the court. Which, he refusing, they beat their drum and, with a cry, ran in upon him. He ordered his men to fire, which did abundant hurt. . . .

Wallace then continued to fire up the street and refused orders to stop, until surprised from the rear, when he forsook his post, and the mob entered in.

They fell to rifle the chapel and schools, and brought the timber work and library with everything that came in their way to the Close and burnt them. . . . It was some time before they could fall upon the images, which was their end in making the attack ; at length they found them in an oven with an old press set before it to cover the mouth.

The images were carried up the street in procession and burned. This recorder adds that the youths kept nothing for themselves ; he seems to imply that they regarded their action as no vulgar pillage, but an act of purgation. The Earl of Balcarres, a strong King's man, gives a less complimentary account of the proceedings :

The rabble . . . pulled down all they could find in the private chapel, demolished all things within the Abbey Church which had been finished some days before . . . then opened the Chancellor's cellars and wines, and made themselves as drunk with wine as before they had been with zeal.

After the Revolution of 1688 episcopacy was formally " abolished " in Scotland, the Chapel Royal revenues reverting to the Crown. Within the nineteenth century they were used to found professorships in divinity or biblical criticism in each of the four Scottish Universities. The minister of St. Giles's, Edinburgh, bears the title Dean of the Chapel Royal.

James's Order of Chivalry fell into abeyance, but was revived by Queen Anne, and has now its own chapel in St. Giles's. The Abbey Church was neglected until 1758, when it was re-roofed. The roof proved too heavy for the walls and fell, doing considerable damage and shattering the royal tomb. At the present day the beautiful church still stands open to the sky. Queen Victoria, it is said, loved it thus, and deplored any suggestion of restoration.

And what of the music which the monarchs sought to encourage ? That wonderful collection from many nations of which Kellie boasted so proudly, was it given to the fires of the High Street ? Did no Romanist exile flee from troubled times at home, and carry with him precious manuscripts which lie dormant in foreign libraries ? In the dark chests and " aumries " of Scottish castles, do no Scottish compositions moulder unseen ? We do not know.

JOHN GAMBLE'S COMMONPLACE BOOK

By CHARLES W. HUGHES

ONE of the most interesting English song books of the middle of the seventeenth century is that entitled 'John Gamble his Book'.¹ It is the most important manuscript source for Gamble's own music. In addition the Gamble Book is one of the important sources for the English song writers of the mid-century: for Henry and Will Lawes, John Wilson, Nicholas Lanier, as well as Webb, Coleman, Smith, and others of lesser fame.

It is also a document of some importance to the study of folksong. Chappell, the author of 'Old English Popular Music', knew the Gamble manuscript and was the first to print tunes from it, notably the well-known "Heigh ho for a Husband", which is mentioned in Shakespeare's 'Much Ado About Nothing'. This song was subsequently reprinted in Charles Vincent's 'Fifty Shakespeare Songs' and elsewhere. It is evident that Chappell did not make a careful study of the entire manuscript, however, and as a result some of his statements are not entirely true.

Jeffrey Pulver in his 'Biographical Dictionary of Old English Music' refers to our volume when he says: "He [Gamble] wrote a commonplace book which passed out of Dr. Rimbault's possession to go to America. This is a distinct loss to English workers".

The collection was probably begun before the year 1659, the date inscribed on the title-page. It was surely continued after 1660, since a number of songs refer to the reign of Charles II. As we have seen, it belonged to Dr. Rimbault, was later acquired for the Drexel Collection and passed with the rest of that collection into the Music Division of the New York Public Library. The printed catalogue of Dr. Rimbault's library, issued in 1877 at the time of the sale, describes the volume under discussion as follows:

A collection of upwards of 300 songs by Wilson, Lawes, Johnson, Gamble, and other English composers, containing also the autograph inscription, "John Gamble his book, Amen. 1659 Anno Domini", thirteen guineas, for America.

It will be noted that the cautious cataloguer claims only the title-page inscription as an autograph. Clearly Gamble could not have written the whole volume himself unless he cultivated two very dissimilar hands. It would appear that at least two individuals had a part in writing the manuscript. The older portion is in a rather neat, precise and crabbed hand which would suggest an earlier date than 1659. We may surmise that the manuscript was already begun when Gamble acquired it, and the first part was written towards the beginning of the seventeenth century or the end of the previous century. The second hand is looser, somewhat careless and probably of a later period. It is in this hand that Gamble's own songs are written.

A comparison of the Commonplace Book with the Playford song anthologies of the period, the 'Select Musicall Ayres and Dialogues' of both 1652 and 1653 and the 'Select Ayres and Dialogues' of 1659, as well as with Gamble's own 'Ayres and Dialogues' of 1656, has resulted in the identification of a number of songs which are anonymous in the

¹ The two Gamble manuscripts in the British Museum contain none of the songs of the John Gamble Book. These two manuscripts are identical in content, differing only in the fact that one (Harl. 6947) contains only texts and tunes, the other (Add. 32339) the basses as well.

Gamble Manuscript. Several especially popular songs appear in two or three collections. The fact that some songs from the 'Select Muscicall Ayres and Dialogues' of 1652 are copied into our *Commonplace Book* in the earlier handwriting, some in the later, would seem to indicate that their popularity endured till the general shift in taste shortly after the Restoration swept all this music into oblivion.

The Gamble Manuscript is particularly precious, since it contains an anthology of English song evidently collected (at least in part) by a mid-seventeenth-century composer. The amount of space allotted to each composer as well as the composers represented are significant for what they reveal of contemporary taste and of Gamble's own predilections.

The composers represented are twelve in number: John Gamble, Henry and Will Lawes, John Wilson, William Webb, Robert Johnson, Thomas Brewer, Robert Smith, Nicholas Lanier, John Withy, Charles Coleman and Yeorknee. Gamble is represented by twenty-eight songs, but it is interesting to note that Henry Lawes is allotted the same number, an added testimony, if one were needed, of the latter's dominant position among contemporary song writers. Wilson is represented by eleven compositions; Webb contributes eight songs; Brewer has three, Smith, Lanier and Yeorknee two each. The songs by Lanier have no attribution in the Gamble Manuscript, but were identified by their appearance in 'Select Muscicall Ayres and Dialogues' and in the 'Select Ayres and Dialogues', where both are ascribed to "Laneare". Finally, Withy and Coleman are each represented by one song. This gives us ninety-seven songs by definite composers against a total of two hundred and forty-three with ample opportunity for speculation among the hundred and forty-six songs of unknown authorship.² Very probably more songs are by Gamble than the twenty-seven actually known to be his.

The Charles Coleman who composed the song "No I will sooner trust ye wind" is probably the father rather than the son of the same name, though we cannot be absolutely certain. The father's contributions to the Playford song-books show that he composed precisely the kind of music which is under discussion here. The elder Coleman was a member of the King's Music in 1625. The date of his appointment is not known. During the Commonwealth he fared better than many of his fellows. Though he turned to music-teaching, he was able to receive Col. Hutchinson in his house and no doubt was also his instructor in music. Hutchinson, though a Puritan, was notably musical and played well on the *viola da gamba*. Coleman re-entered the royal service at the Restoration "for a viall, among the lutes and voices", since his former post as composer had gone to the famous Captain Cooke. However, Coleman received this position also after the death of Henry Lawes in 1662.

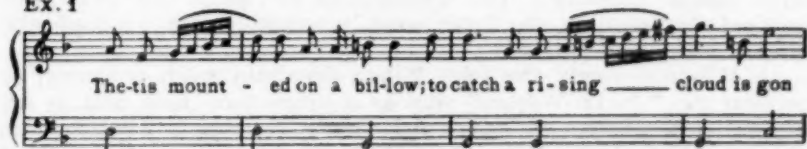
John Withie (or Withy) is a very minor figure of the period. He has hitherto been known only as a composer of viol music. The only music by Withie in printed form is included in 'Musick's Recreation on the Viol, Lyra-way' (1669). John Jenkins regarded him highly enough to copy a Pavane, an Allemande, an Air and a Courante for three instruments.³ Seventeen pieces by Withie appear in a manuscript in the British Museum (Add. 29283-5). Our manuscript shows him in a new light, however, as a song writer. "Loue where is now thy Deity", Withie's single contribution to the *Commonplace Book*, is a conventional lover's complaint. The text is by Richard Broome.

² The number of songs will vary according to the method employed in counting them. A number are represented only by the initial phrase of the text. Here I have counted the songs with a musical setting sufficiently complete to make identification possible.

³ British Museum Add. 31423.

Thomas Brewer (? 1611) was educated and taught the viol in Christ's Hospital. On leaving that institution in 1626 he contributed music to Hilton's 'Catch as Catch Can' (1658), the 'Musical Companion' (1672) and Playford's 'Select Musically Ayres and Dialogues'. The British Museum contains a considerable amount of his vocal music in manuscript. John Jenkins also preserved a trio of Brewer's for three viols by copying it into the same manuscript which contains the Withie dances. The melody of Brewer's song "Drowsy sun", unlike most of the tunes in our manuscript, is decidedly florid in character. The text contains a particularly amusing figure of speech. "Thetis mounted on a billow to catch a rising cloud is gon : which shee will stuff into a pillow : to rest thy golden locke's upon". The word "rising" is expressed by an ascending octave scale :

Ex. 1



"Oh yt mine eyes" is the only song in the collection dealing with a religious subject. It is a long and graphic meditation on the Crucifixion. The little of Brewer's work which appears in our manuscript strikes a rather unusual note and makes us wish that he were better represented.

Robert Smith is a composer who is little known, but whose work shows a racy and original turn. He possessed a talent which must surely have gained wider recognition if death had not cut his career short. The records concerning his life are scanty. He became a "musician in ordinary" in 1673. A later entry indicates that he was installed as Pelham Humphrey's successor. In 1675 his own successor, Richard Hart, was appointed. The list of his printed compositions comprises three secular compositions in 'Melothesia', posthumous compositions for recorder in Greeting's 'Pleasant Companion' (1682) and for violin in Playford's 'Division Violin' (1685). To these must be added interesting sets of dances in three and four parts preserved at the New York Public Library. A set of dances for trio in the Britton Manuscript is in Scots folksong style. The British Museum possesses some light music in manuscript. The texts of his anthems contained in Clifford's Collection seem to be the only remaining traces of religious works. To these we add the two songs contained in Gamble, "Hee yt did ever scorn Loue's might" and "She which would not I would choose". The latter also appeared in 'Select Musically Ayres and Dialogues.'

The songs by "Laneare" are not ascribed to him in the Gamble Manuscript, but have been identified by their appearance in Playford publications. "Laneare" is Nicholas Lanier, a member of one of the musical families of the period, and, in spite of his scanty representation in our manuscript, a person of much importance. He held the key-post of Master of the King's Music and "luter" before the Commonwealth. During the Commonwealth he evidently went abroad and travelled for some time. At the Restoration he resumed his old posts and held them until his death in February 1666. His talent as a song writer was combined with skill in painting. In the capacity of art connoisseur he assisted Charles I in acquiring his remarkable collections of paintings. His own talents were displayed in the settings which he designed or painted for court masques, for which he was both composer and artist. A self-portrait still hangs in the Oxford Music School.

Lanier's music for Ben Johnson's 'Lovers Made Men' is supposed to mark the first employment of the new style of recitative in England. He was also among the composers for Davenant's 'The Siege of Rhodes, The First Day's Entertainment', which has been claimed as the first English opera. His songs are prominent in the Playford collections as well as in a series of manuscripts in the British Museum. In the Gamble collection we find "Thou art not faire for all thy red and white" which is printed both in the 'Select Musically Ayres and Dialogues' and the 'Select Ayres and Dialogues', and "Neither sighs nor tears", printed only in the former collection.

The composer Walter Yeorknee need hardly delay us long. His two songs, "Painte, painte noe more" and "Since itt hath been lately high treason", both lack a bass and suggest the careless inspiration of some musical amateur. The reference to the dangers of imprudent political discussion in the latter song, however, carries an authentic echo of a troubled period.

J. Wilson is surely the John Wilson of whom much is known, or perhaps the "Jacke Wilson" who as a singing-boy took part in the original performances of 'Much Ado About Nothing'. He was born in 1595 in Kent, entered the service of Charles I in 1635, and was valued so highly by that monarch that we are told that the king "not only listened to him with the greatest attention, but frequently condescended to lean or lay his hand on his shoulder, while he was playing." Wilson's stay at Oxford is mentioned by Anthony Wood, and his fame was such that he was granted the degree of Doctor of Music (1644-5). After a period of retirement during the Civil War with Sir William Walter he became Choragus at Oxford and finally reappeared on the court records as a musician (March 8th 1660-1). In 1662 he replaced his friend, Henry Lawes, when he became a Gentleman of the Chapel Royal in his stead. He died on February 22nd 1673.

His 'Psalterium Carolinum. The Devotions of His Sacred Majestie in his Solitudes and Sufferings, rendered in Verse' was at once a tribute to his royal patron and to the tolerance of the Puritan faction which was in power at the time. His 'Cheerful Ayres' of 1660 are more typical of the composer and of more interest to us, since all the composers found in it are also contributors to our manuscript: namely, Nicholas Lanier, Robert Johnson and Wilson himself.

Two of the eleven songs by Wilson which are found in our manuscript appear also in printed versions, "Cloris false loue made Clora weep" and a setting of Shakespeare's lines "Take, O take those lips away". Rimbault's statement that Wilson had composed the music to Richard Brome's comedy 'The Northern Lass' (1632) is said by Pulver to be based on manuscript fragments preserved in the Oxford Music School. This statement is confirmed in an interesting fashion by our manuscript. The song "Nor loue nor fate dare I" bears the note "composed for the comedy 'The Northern Lass.'" The sentiment of the song may be summed up in the couplet "Like Icarus I soar'd to high ffor which alas I fall & Die".

Richard Brome deserves a note here. He entered the literary profession by the back door, having been successively Ben Johnson's servant, his friend and finally co-author with Johnson's eldest son Benjamin of the play 'A Fault in Friendship'. Brome wrote many other plays besides 'The Northern Lass'.

All that we know of Webb is contained in two brief notices and in the printed musical anthologies of the second half of the seventeenth century. He was at court before the Civil War, a Gentleman of the

Chapel and a performer in the royal "public and private musicke". His printed music is contained in the song-books which Playford published from 1652 to 1672 and in Hilton's 'Catch as Catch Can'. The preface of the 'Musical Banquet', published during the Civil War, reveals that he was a teacher of viol-playing and singing at that time. Of the songs included in our manuscript only one seems to have been printed. This is "Victorious beauty", which must have enjoyed a certain amount of popularity since it appears both in the 'Select Musicall Ayres and Dialogues' and in the 'Select Ayres and Dialogues'.

William Lawes seems to have cultivated the older forms by preference. He was a celebrated writer of fancies for viols and organ, but managed to infuse into this form something personal and romantic which sets him apart from the serene yet melancholy Deering or the facile East. His interest in the canon also reveals him as a musician of serious tastes. He was also a song-writer. His best known work in this form, a setting of the well-known lines "Gather ye rosebuds while ye may", appears in the 'Select Musical Ayres and Dialogues' of Playford in a version for three voices, in our manuscript as a solo.⁴

William Lawes was born in 1602. He received his early musical training as a chorister in Chichester Cathedral, where he remained till his departure for London. There he received instruction from Giovanni Coperario through the assistance of his patron, the Earl of Hertford. In 1635 he entered the king's service as a musician in ordinary "for the lute and voices". During the Civil War he espoused the royal cause. Though he was appointed to the relatively safe position of commissary, he was killed by a stray bullet at the siege of Chester (1645). Hawkins states that the king put on mourning for Lawes.

Only two of the ten songs by Lawes in our manuscript appeared in print: "O my Clarissa thou cruell fair", which was published in the 'Select Musical Ayres and Dialogues' (1652), and "Faith be no longer coy", which was printed in the same volume.⁵ Among the remaining eight is a setting of Ben Jonson's lines, "Still to bee neate still to be drest",⁶ "Upp ladies upp" is a very pretty song in the manner of a *caccia*. It represents the game of love as a hunt—the ladies, however, being the pursuers. The deprecatory note in "I loue thee for thy fickleness" is both amusing and at variance with the frank self-confidence or the affected ardour of most of the love songs in our collection. It expounds the theory that if his mistress had fewer faults she would surely scorn the attentions of the poet.

The large share allotted to Henry Lawes in our manuscript has already been noted, and this tribute to a rival composer is eloquent testimony to the dominant place which Lawes had gained among the song-writers of the period. Henry Lawes is commonly supposed to have been a pupil of Coperario, though proof for this is lacking. Unlike his brother he was willing to abandon balanced phrases and tuneful melody for a more declamatory method. This was a growing tendency of the day and one Milton himself had praised in the well-known lines in which he commends Lawes for teaching "our English musicke how to span Words with just note and accent". Henry Lawes was born towards the end of the year 1595. A break in our sources follows until

⁴ In addition, the metre of the two versions is different. The tune in Gamble is in 6-4 (to use the modern equivalent), while Playford prints it in 4-4.

⁵ More confusion exists concerning the life of William Lawes than can be clarified in a succinct account. Dates which actually refer to an older William Lawes have been transferred to William the brother of Henry Lawes. Willa Evans gives an interesting account of the elder William in her 'Henry Lawes, Musician and Friend of Poets', p. xvi, footnote. See also 'Proceedings of the Musical Association', Session 89 (1932-33), p. 103, for an account of William Lawes by Rupert Erlebach.

⁶ Willa Evans in her volume on Henry Lawes suggests that this song was set for the revival of Ben Jonson's 'Silent Woman' in 1635 (footnote f. 114).

the year 1626, when he was sworn in as an epistler in the Chapel Royal. In January 1630 he was appointed "a musician for the voices". He was granted £20 a year in February 1630 as "musician for the lutes and voices in ordinary". Lawes wrote during the Commonwealth: "Though I have lost my Fortunes with my Master (of ever blessed memory) I am not so low to bow for a subsistence to the follies of this Age . . ."

As this indicates, he did not fall into the desperate condition that afflicted many of his contemporaries. He was fortunate in finding patrons and titled pupils, notably the two daughters of the Earl of Bridgewater whom Lawes mentions in the preface of the first book of 'Ayres and Dialogues' (1653): "Most of them being composed when I was employed by your ever Honour'd Parents to attend your Lady-shipp's Education in Musick". In 1660 Lawes became composer "in the private musick for the lutes and voices". In 1661 he received the place of Robert Marsh as musician for the lutes and voices. He had a brief tenure of these posts, however, for the Cheque-Book of the Chapel Royal records his death October 21st 1662.

Students of English music of the seventeenth century will think first of Lawes's music to Milton's 'Comus'. His songs may be studied in his first, second and third book of 'Ayres and Dialogues for One Two and Three Voyces' (1653-55-58) and also in Playford's 'Select Musical Ayres and Dialogues' (1652-53-59). He made rather florid settings of the metrical psalms by George Sandys and also collaborated with his brother in a collection of psalm settings for three voices. A convivial if somewhat slight contrapuntal vein is displayed in the five canons contributed to 'Catch as Catch Can'. Of occasional interest is the anthem 'Zadok the Priest' written for the coronation of Charles II. In addition to music for masques and stage productions he also wrote music for the first and fifth entries of Davenant's 'Siege of Rhodes, The First Day's Entertainment' (1656). Lawes's music is found in a number of contemporary manuscripts in addition to the one under discussion here. A number of songs in our manuscript which lack any indication of authorship are attributed to Lawes in printed anthologies of the day.

Our manuscript contains two versions of "Keepe on your vaile & hide your eye", which deals with a favourite theme, the fatal effect of a lady's glances. The second only is attributed to "H. Lawes". The soprano of this second version is written with the C clef on the first line of the stave, the treble clef being the rule elsewhere in our manuscript. The basses of the two versions differ somewhat. Lawes evidently found it possible to improve on the original draft. "Bid me but live" deserves the popularity which it evidently enjoyed. It is an excellent example of Lawes's more melodious vein. "Thoughts doe not" deals with the oft-debated effect of inconstancy in arousing desire, the shepherd here being ardent and his mistress fickle and cold. The shepherd exclaims "Had I beene as cold and nice And as often turneing Then as she had I been yet And she as I now burneing". Here we see Lawes in the more florid and ornamental vein which, though less frequent, is nevertheless a characteristic aspect of his musical style. Of special interest is a setting of Shakespeare's Sonnet CXVI, though the text, as Lawes sets it, has been considerably altered.⁷

His texts show the fondness for the conceit, for the theme of pastoral love, for the conventional postures and oft-repeated philosophies of love and love-making. The bacchanalian note is absent from the songs

⁷ See 'Lawes' version of Shakespeare's Sonnet cavi' by Willa McClung Evans, PMLA, Vol. LI, No. 1, March 1936.

included in our collection. Perhaps this was due to the behaviour expected of a tutor to the Earl of Bridgewater's daughters. Possibly, but not probably, it represents a lack of sympathy on the part of Lawes for the toper's song to his drink and to the plump god.

We end our study of the composers of our manuscript with John Gamble himself. Pulver, in his 'Biographical Dictionary of Old English Music', has been somewhat severe with Gamble. "He was", says Pulver, "a seventeenth-century violinist and performer on the cornet who composed a good deal of third-rate music which in spite of its mediocrity became very popular with the author's contemporaries". From a historian's point of view, however, music which was "very popular" deserves study because it moulded and was moulded by contemporary taste. Also, without any intention of claiming first place for our composer, we may say that he was capable of turning out a very neat and charming tune. It is also true that he did not always do so.

Of Gamble's early life nothing is known. Anthony Wood tells us that Gamble was a composer and performer in the King's Theatre. He was a guest of Wood's at Oxford in 1658. During the Restoration Gamble was appointed (1660) as a performer in the wind-music, playing the cornett, as is more specifically indicated in the Lord Chamberlain's Rolls for the following year. We also learn that he performed in the Chapel Royal. A petition of Gamble's which still exists states that all his possessions were destroyed in the great fire of 1666. As a result of his petition he received the loan of £5 (he had previously borrowed £2 on June 2nd). We need not reproach Gamble with squandering his substance, since his salary was far in arrears. Although we find him listed as a violinist as well as a performer on the cornett in 1666, he was reduced to the necessity of petitioning for the payment of part of the salary due to him. By 1685 the court owed Gamble £112 : 17 : 6, the payment of which was ordered by James II. Gamble did not long survive this stroke of good fortune, for he died in 1687. Indeed we cannot be quite sure that he received it. His will, dated 1680, gives his music and £20 of the money owed him to his grandson and the remainder to his wife.

Gamble's surviving works are all songs. His printed works, and it is by these that he has been chiefly known, are two in number: 'Ayres and Dialogues, To be sung to the Theorbo-Lute or Base Viol' (1656) and a volume with a similar title published in 1659 which, inconsistently enough, contains music for three as well as for one and two voices. The preface to his 'Ayres and Dialogues' of 1656 deserves quotation both because it is an unusually florid example of its kind and because it suggests a possible explanation for the lack of duplication between our manuscript and the printed work. We may surmise that the 'Ayres and Dialogues' may have been written rather rapidly to please Gamble's patron, Thomas Stanley. At any rate all the poems in the volume are by Stanley, and Gamble's awestruck admiration suggests the importance of this gentleman. Indeed, Thomas Stanley seems to have been a versatile person, active both as translator and poet, a student of the classics and the author of a voluminous 'History of Philosophy'. He was a friend of the poet Lovelace, and the latter contributed a laudatory poem to Gamble's volume, a poem which deserves partial quotation here since it so exactly expresses the ideal of song held at this time :

What means this stately TABLATURE

The Ballance of thy strains?

Which seems instead of sifting pure

T'extend and Rack thy veins :

Thy Odes first their owne Harmonie did break

For singing truth is but in Tune to speak.

Gamble expresses a similar sentiment in his rather abject apology for being so bold as to provide musical settings for these poems:

To the worthy of all Honour

Thomas Stanley, Esq.

I acknowledge it a bold undertaking, to compose your words (which are so pure Harmonie in themselves) into any other Musick: But it was not in my ambition, or hope to mend the least Accent or Emphasis w^{ch} they received from your own numerous soul, but to essay how neer, a whole life spent in the study of Musical Compositions, should imitate the flowing and natural graces which you have created by your fancie.⁸

These samples of the very copious prefatory material may be concluded with a passage which surely shows Gamble in his most florid literary vein:

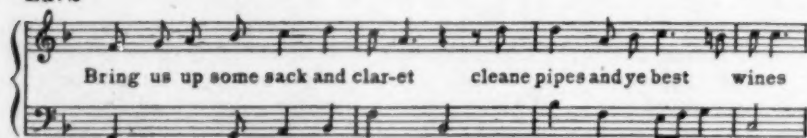
My Lords and Gentlemen; I onely wish you the same Kind, Genuine Joy in the Hearing of these *Seraphick Poems* as the most *Noble Author* had in the Writing, the World in Reading, and my Self in the Composing of them; and then I'm confident, *Musick* will have wrought a greater miracle then to animate with sense *Plants* and *Vegetables*: that is, to surprize and take in Refined and Abstracted Spirits, which is a holy invasion upon Heaven.

But I detain you too long in the Porch with these *Lowd Instruments* the Soft Quire waits you within; Please you Vouchsafe your favorable Thoughts . . .

The twenty-seven songs attributed to John Gamble in his *Commonplace Book* must be reduced by a whole series (Nos. 201-5 also 303-4) for which no music was copied in. We cannot tell whether he had selected these texts but failed to set them or whether his original draft was never transferred to our volume. It is, perhaps, worth noting that the first identifiable song by Gamble is No. 197. It is also to be remarked that the change of handwriting noticed earlier in this paper begins with No. 177. In the index 177-9 have been written over and No. 180 is in the second hand.⁹ Even though most songs in both parts are anonymous, our composer is only named in the second part. Possibly our manuscript may have been begun by some other person and then continued by Gamble. (The index of the 'Catalogue of Manuscript Music in the British Museum' lists both the Gamble manuscripts preserved there as autograph. (This information is not repeated in the text, and it is not clear whether the statement is based on more than probability).)

If we were to judge John Gamble by his choice of song-texts, we should be forced to the conclusion that he was a good friend of the bottle. "Bring us up sum sacke & Claret"

Ex. 2



he calls, matching the liveliness of the text with a Scotch snap at the cadences, while "When ye chill charockoe blowes" and "Ladies adiew" swell the bacchanalian chorus. Gamble is also the only named composer of those included in our *Commonplace Book* to write for more than solo voice. This is in part a matter of style. Such a song as "If welth could keep a man alive" suggests an atmosphere of conviviality in which the mirth of the assembled toppers demands expression in a lusty chorus (here in two parts). "Silence your charmeinge noyce", though it is not a drinking-song, is also provided with a refrain for two voices.

⁸ Thomas Stanley must also have known John Wilson, for he arranged the texts for the 'Psalterium Carolinum' which Wilson set to music.

⁹ This should perhaps be stated more precisely. The first hand is not found beyond No. 177, unless the song "Bee then free men" (unnumbered, opposite No. 284) is in the earlier hand. However, several pages in the earlier part of the book are in a later hand (for example No. 42), as if pages left blank had been filled in.

Only one song from our Commonplace Book appears in the printed 'Ayres and Dialogues' of 1656. This is "Tormentt of absence & delay" (No. 231 of the 'Commonplace Book', No. 20 of the 'Ayres and Dialogues'). The manner of transcribing songs employed here is quite at variance with the method a composer would follow. Surely a composer would jot down musical ideas, melodic fragments with their appropriate texts, or perhaps the music alone, since he might have the words in mind. There is at least one song (No. 308) where the bass may have been added after the melody, and some which show corrections, but in general the method followed here suggests the approach of a scribe or copyist rather than that of a composer making a first draft. The collection may represent Gamble's finished copies of his songs, but it is decidedly not his sketch-book.

The period of the Restoration was one devoted to rhetoric of a florid variety and to the search for the most vehement and baroque figures of speech. The poet Alexander Brome, who contributed the verses to at least one song in our anthology, was conscious of this, for he writes: "... wee like ffooles fathom ye earth and skyes and dreynie the scooles flor names to express you by outvauntt the Lowdstt hiperbolies to dubb you sainte and deities". Some of the more extravagant efforts in our volume are more calculated to evoke smiles than tears. There is the lover who calls out vehemently "Goe then my Muse & let this verse Bring back my Life or else my Hearse". Still another cries "Whatt will beecome off me . . . ; chang'd to a weeping hospitall".¹⁰ The lady's chief weapon seems to have been the glances from her bright eyes, which were evidently used with devastating effect. "Com then and kill me wth yor eye For if you lett me liue, I dye". Sometimes this weapon was less effective. "Did you know whatt greife I tooke; Since you sentt thatt angrey Looke . . . Looke againe, twill doe noe harme Sure such Lookes can never charme. I am on; & off att pleasure Doe thy worst and take noe Leasure". One poet writes prettily enough when he begs his mistress "Ore cloud those Eyes off thine bo-peepe thy featurers Warme with an aprill shine scorch nott thy creatures".

The love-songs pass through all gradations from flowery rhetoric to frank accounts of seventeenth-century love making, including not a few loutish and brutal verses set down by rejected suitors who often seek consolation for their wounded feelings in the bottle. "I'de rather marrie a disease Then courtt the thinge I cannott please", exclaims such a one; but though the remainder of the poem is frank enough, it is hardly a fair example of the foulness and brutality of some of these verses.

Yet here and there we find a poem which, without losing the characteristic imprint of the period, manages to rise above the usual level. A charming example is "Aske mee noe more":

Ex. 3

Aske mee noe more wheth-er doth stray y^e gold-en At-tumns of ye day

for in pure Love heaven did pre-pare those powders to-en-riche y^o hayre

¹⁰. We might add No. 334: "Make mee noe more your tennis ball . . . thatt I may hope to rise; nott ffearre to ffall".

Everyone except the trained specialist must judge the poetry of any historical period by a selection of its more available and its more beautiful verse. In each printed anthology favourites will be omitted and some verse of lesser worth included. Yet time and the efforts of scholars, editors and critical readers will have rejected a great quantity of poetry which could by no means lay claim to either inspiration or skilled workmanship. Yet for this very reason the reading of an unpruned anthology like the Gamble Manuscript is interesting, since it gives not the perfect expression of the thought and feeling of a period but the confused anticipations, the imperfect echoes and reiterations which fill most volumes of verse. Delightful, too, are the perfect and living verses in poems which in every other line put Phyllis and Corydon through the same attitudes, the same rebuffs, the same tears and sighs that have graced a thousand other poems. Herrick's lovely poem "Gather ye rosebuds while ye may" is echoed, for example, by "Beauty's like a fading flower When the spring is in her prime But is withered in an hower If soe it be not pluck'd in tyme". The lines from Lovelace's famous poem appear in Gamble's book with only minor concessions to the freedom of seventeenth-century spelling: "Sstone walls do nott a prison make Nor iron bars a kadge". But the thought, if not the wording, is reproduced in another poem: "Locke bars walls Loneness altogetther meett Makes mee noe prisoner butt an Anchorett". "I like ye marigold liue, Thy looke on mee my sight doth giue, Thine absense sett mee straight a winking" presents an idea to which Shakespeare had given perfect form in his "Hark, hark! the lark".

Though most of the songs of the Gamble collection deal with the immutable themes of love and wine, a number deal with or refer to topical matters. Two Christmas songs are contained in the collection. "Beate upp a dromm" depicts a mock struggle (between the feasters within and the cold without) which the feasters win with the aid of "bacons and capons", not to mention "iuce of barley". Finally, as the feasters gain the day, the song announces: "Winter is confounded Christmas hath the day . . ." and ends, "May the cheare once a yeare, for his fate be mended. When the old yeerr's ended, frolic with the new":

Ex. 4

The musical notation for 'Beate upp a dromm' is presented in two systems. The first system shows the melody in a treble clef and the bass line in a bass clef, both in a common time signature. The melody consists of eighth and sixteenth notes, while the bass line is mostly whole and half notes. The lyrics 'Beate upp a dromm now win-ter reignes and from the playnes doth' are written below the first system. The second system continues the melody and bass line, with the lyrics 'drive the swaynes and still mayn-teines the tyt-le of a king' written below it.

The other song, "Christmas is my name ffar have I gone", as Chappell shows, was a popular ballad which appears in a number of contemporary forms. Here Christmas deplures his troubles and difficulties. He comes from far away to find the countryside deserted for the city. The old universal welcome is past, for Protestant and Puritan will have nothing to do with him, and all his friends have fled to the town.

An echo of the strife of roundhead and cavalier appears in a song where the ladies find that their gallants lack fire and threaten to become roundheads to encourage pursuit. The hatred of Puritans which appears in these songs is not uniform. In "The purelings of the Ditty" we find the Protestant service praised, a favourable note in a predominantly dissonant chorus.¹¹

Perhaps the bitterest reference to the Puritans is found in a song dealing with Cock Lavorell, who is represented as inviting the devil to dinner. Cock Lavorell or Cock Lorrell was a rogue of the period with a special talent for highway robbery. He is described in a list of rogues published in 'Martin Markhall, his Defence and Answer to the Bellman of London' (S. Rowland, 1610) as follows:

After him succeeded, by the general council, one Cock Lorrell, the most notorious knave that ever lived. By trade he was a tinker, often carrying a pan and hammer for show; but when he came to a good booty, he would cast his profession in a ditch and play the padder.

We are to understand that the devil and he should be on good terms. The bill of fare of the banquet described in our song consists of individuals disliked by the poet and, in addition to "two roasted shruies" and other odd dishes, includes "a puritan poachtt."

The natural inclination to look back at the past with longing is always strong. It must have been peculiarly so in a period when the reign of Charles I shone with an especial lustre across the troubled days of the Commonwealth. Accordingly, one of the minor but persistent moods of our collection is this one of regret for the past. "Listen iolly gentlemen", for example, paints a picture of a time when everything was comfortable and merry and when the golden past had not yet given place to the dubious and uncomfortable present.

Indeed, in "Reioyce all England" the poet goes back to Guy of Warwick, who flourished in the thirteenth century, and contrasts him with more recent heroes to the considerable disadvantage of the latter.¹²

The temper of the times is reflected in a number of songs. One poem, which was set to music by Gamble, suggests that Cupid be petitioned to hold Parliament to resolve the rumored quarrels of the king and queen. The differences between Charles II and his Portuguese queen, Catherine of Braganza, to which this song refers, were not to be reconciled. Charles was neither constant nor kind, though he is said to have been moved to tears at a time when her life was threatened by illness. His persistence in having his former mistress, Lady Castlemaine, at court was a primary cause in forming a breach between them which was never healed.

The suspicion and distrust with which most Englishmen regarded the influx of "foreigners" who followed Charles II is reflected in another song whose title is eloquent if its contents: "Harke harke Ile tell you news from the Cort . . . all ye french . . . now are all sent back to France".

"God bless our noble king" refers to Charles II. The opening words immediately suggest a relationship to "God save the King". The tune, however, is quite different, and the text is an account of the king's progress from Whitehall to St. Paul's written in a broadly comic style.

"You madcaps of England" deals with a group of English soldiers at the siege of Rochelle who frolic, run up debts and then advance with careless bravery against cannon and musketry. The affair was not a

¹¹ "There is noe bell nor organs there / To make a fearefull noyse to heare / The surplis is not worne nor yet the cope / Noe choristers to make a noyse / We prayse the Lord without such toyes." An impatient copyist has added, "finis finis / for my part finis", followed by a line which has been hopelessly blotted.

¹² There is also a reference to "St Bevis and those worthy men." Both are included by Puttenham among the "stories of old time" which were favorites with "blind harpers or such like tavern minstrels".

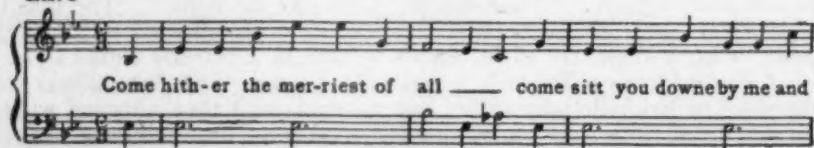
happy one as viewed from the pages of a history rather than a song-book. Rochelle was a Huguenot stronghold which rebelled against Richelieu, who finally laid siege to it to close it against the English fleet. The Duke of Buckingham, having gathered a fleet and an army at Portsmouth, set sail to aid the beleaguered city on June 27th 1627. He besieged and blockaded the fort of Saint-Martin, but the French succeeded in provisioning and reinforcing the besieged garrison. Buckingham, lacking the reinforcements for which he had asked, was forced to withdraw after suffering considerable losses.

Though no names are mentioned in "Ye madcaps of England", it nevertheless has a connection with "Com hither ye merriest of all ye land", since the "Murrey" and the "Wentworth", who "in the midst of all their wine Discourse of Plato and Aretine", seem both to have seen service in France, though on opposite sides. The "Wentworth" referred to was presumably Sir Thomas Wentworth (1591-1667), who was a favorite of Buckingham and accompanied him to the siege of Rochelle.¹³ "Murrey" (Sir Robert Murray), on the other hand, had gained Richelieu's favour and had risen to the rank of lieutenant-colonel. He fought for Charles II in the Civil War and in the Scottish uprising in 1650. A nomination as Privy Councillor in Scotland (1651) was followed by other distinctions. He was a member of the Club which was formed to discuss the "new philosophy" and secured a charter from Charles II which established it as the "Royal Society of London for improving Natural Knowledge" (July 1662), and became its first president. It is curious, indeed, to find a song connected with the founder of the oldest scientific society in England, even if the emphasis of the song is somewhat more bacchanalian than scientific. We may, perhaps, assume that a common devotion to the cause of Charles II had healed any differences between these two figures.

Our collection is predominantly an expression of the city-dweller. We have already noted that Father Christmas finds everyone in town. Another song, "Ladies you loose yor time", dismisses country pleasures as nothing compared with those of London town. Nevertheless, across these songs for city folk we hear from time to time an authentic pastoral note. In Gamble's charming song "The morninge doth wastt" the line "noe measure so meet nor musique so sweet to us as a pipe and a tabour" crystallizes in a few words the atmosphere of the green countryside of England.

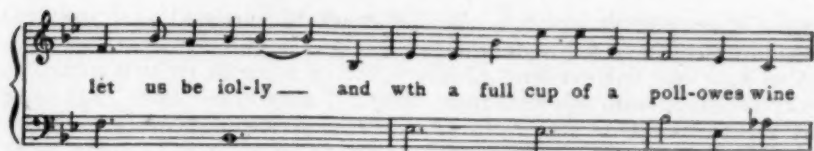
The songs in the Gamble collection tend to fall into a few well-defined musical types. There are the songs which move in a more or less lively 6-4 movement. When they are rapid they approach the character of a country dance, as in "Come hither the merriest".¹⁴ Indeed, many of the songs have the character of violin tunes to which texts have been adapted. These tunes are rapid in movement, abound in wide melodic skips, and frequently show a careless relationship of text to tune. The metric signature for all these tunes is the old equivalent of our modern 6-4:

Ex. 5



¹³ This song deals with gallants at a bear-baiting "at ye bridge foote". Other names are mentioned including Wilmot, Weston, George Symon, Steadlinge, Hugh Pollerd and what looks like Gam^e (? Gamble). The text of "Though Murrey be undoubtedly" lists other wits and roisterers.

¹⁴ The same tune with minor variations is utilized for No. 74, which begins with the same words but develops quite differently.



The songs in duple metre are uniformly provided with C with a vertical stroke as metric signature, which, of course, did not at this time have the meaning of *alla breve*.

The second basic type is a sort of recitative, not the musical recitation of the earliest Florentine reformers, but a type of song which is half melody, half speech. This manner of composing completely exasperated Burney, who calls it "psalmody" and suggests uncharitably that a spoken recitation would be preferable to such a drawling kind of music. A song of this type is "Ffier ffier" in which the opening cry of "fire" is repeated a third higher and then continues "Loe heere I burn". The last eight bars of this song are notably more melodious than the opening, so that there is the least hint of the recitative-aria relationship.

An interesting characteristic of many of these melodies is the enlarged bar, frequently employed to broaden the cadence. In "Come hither" the predominant grouping of six is broadened to nine at the chief cadential points (see Ex. 5). The broadening in this case gives the effect of a ballad-singer whose sense of rhythm fails at the cadence and who catches his breath and starts in again after waiting an extra beat. This tune, which has melodic characteristics suggesting that it is a folk-song, seems to have troubled the musician who supplied it with its rather clumsy bass. Both the central and the final cadence are on the dominant. As a result, the very numerous stanzas describing the various suitors who appear, only to be rejected, follow without a full stop in the manner of many old ballad tunes.

In "Aske mee noe more" the broadening of the cadential bars is combined with a change of movement, so that the last two bars contain seven and five beats (see Ex. 3). Such metric shifts are now usually indicated by a change of signature. In "Ffier ffier" the last bar is double, containing eight instead of four crotchets. In "A bonny bonny bird", however, the uniform movement in six broadens to nine without special indication, followed by three more changes between 4's and 6's. The care with which these changes are marked is the exception, not the rule. This last song is also interesting for the vestige of the old black notation which it displays. In bar 8 the melody is written as follows:

Ex. 6



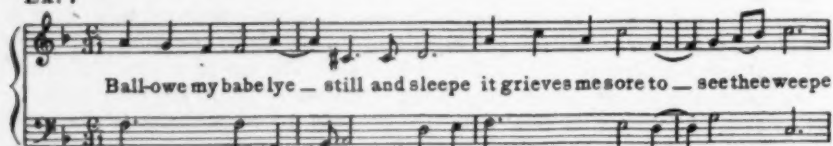
Here the tailless black note at the opening of bar 8 is clearly a minim and the equivalent of two crotchets. There seems to be no special reason for employing this notation at this particular point. It would appear to be an optional mode of notation used according to the scribe's discretion. A not infrequent use of the black notation, however, occurs in situations where the scribe wrote a crotchet where a minim was required. In such a case the copyist cancelled the tail of the faulty note with a special sign of correction, leaving a tailless black note, the equivalent of the required minim.

Our manuscript belongs to a time when the major and minor scales had displaced the older modes. Nevertheless, the use of key-signatures

shows a variability which is the hall-mark of a period of transition. Signatures seem to follow no definite plan. The old signatures seem to us to have one flat too few; G minor, for example, is written with one flat, D minor with no signature. Here, however, we find "Oh stay by mee", which is clearly in D minor with one flat, while "Deare why doe you say you love", which is just as certainly in G minor, also has one flat.

Another characteristic of an earlier period is the fact that the bar-line does not always reflect the musical rhythm. In "Ballowe my babe" the alteration of 2's and 3's is very free, although the time-signature and the bar-lines remain unaltered:

Ex. 7



The natural sign is not used in the Gamble manuscript. A sharp is used when a flat is to be cancelled, a flat when a sharp is to be cancelled. This sometimes results in combinations which look extremely odd to a modern eye (as when B \sharp and an F \flat occur simultaneously as equivalents for B \natural and F \natural).

The music of the Gamble manuscript is often not of a high order. It was, after all, an album of light, popular and theatrical music. Technical blunders are frequent, consecutive fifths and octaves as well as other musical lapses which are more difficult to catalogue.

Students of Chappell will tend to value the Gamble manuscript for the popular songs and ballads it contains. However, Chappell's note on Gamble,¹⁵ though most interesting, is not entirely accurate. It demands a word here in connection with the very difficult question of the popular character of some of the anonymous tunes in Gamble. The note states that the Gamble manuscript

contains the songs Dr. Wilson composed for Brome's play, 'The Northern Lass', and many compositions of H. and W. Lawes, as well as common songs and ballads. The last are usually noted down without basses; and in some instances the space intended for the tune is unfilled.

Chappell reprints "I'll Never Love Thee More" and shows that the text appears in a number of publications ranging through the second half of the seventeenth century and the first years of the eighteenth. He points out that the tune appears in 'The Dancing Master' of 1686 and in all later editions. "Heigh Ho for a Husband" is twice referred to in Shakespeare's 'Much Ado About Nothing' (Act II, Sc. i and Act III, Sc. iv) and was a well-known popular tune. "Now the Spring is Come" (Chappell, Vol. I ff. 194-5) was evidently as widely diffused, although Chappell clearly refers to the tune and not the text (Gamble's version begins "Christmas is my name farr have I gone".)

The popular character of these examples seems well marked. Chappell's statement that tunes without basses or with texts only are popular songs is less defensible and can be based only on a hasty examination of our manuscript. Seven songs definitely ascribed to Gamble have only the text, and one a tune but no bass. One song by Wilson and two by Yeorknee also appear without the bass. One might be uncharitable and speculate that Yeorknee (who is not otherwise known to fame) was probably unable to compose a bass to his air. The other

¹⁵ 'Old English Popular Music', ed. of 1893, Vol. I, bottom of p. 190.

composers were sufficient masters of this art. It is clear, then, that Chappell's criterion for popular tunes is invalid. In Gamble's case how natural it is that he should have been careless about adding basses to his own songs: after all, he could write the basses at his convenience, since this was his own book. Indeed, in one case the bass is added in a blacker ink and with evidence of corrections, although we cannot be sure that these additions were by Gamble himself.

There are also a number of tunes whose popular character is probable. Such are "Backe and sides goe bare goe bare", "Hey hoe care goe get thee gon from me", and others.

One more note may be added concerning a reference in "I went from England into ffrance". This long and rambling satirical narrative refers in passing to "John Dory", and furnishes indirect testimony to the continued popularity of that famous air, which appears printed as a canon in Ravenscroft's 'Deuteromelia' and is mentioned in Bishop Earle's pithy description of a common fiddler: "Hunger is the greatest pains he takes, except a broken head sometimes, and labouring John Dorey". Here we have a bit of added testimony to the durability of this ancient narrative of the defeat of the Genoese John Dory by Nicholl of Cornwall, an event which seems to have occurred towards the middle of the fourteenth century.

Although the Gamble manuscript contains some spirited and some charming songs, its primary interest is as a document. It reflects contemporary taste, not neatly arranged and selected, but copied in with references to contemporary events and with echoes from the past, a motley array of composers and their songs. More than most manuscripts of the period, it carries with it something of the life of that dissipated yet mannerly period, alternatively brutal and courtly, artificially elegant or crudely frank, but with flashes of poetry, of tenderness and music.

GRIEG'S 'SLAATTER' FOR PIANOFORTE

By JOHN HORTON

THE problems of arranging and adapting folk-music have come to be regarded almost from an ethical standpoint. Is it justifiable to take the peasant from his field or byre, make him exchange his smock for whatever may be the fashionable attire of the day and encourage him to charm urban society with the raciness and mother-wit of his habitual conversation? Or should the townsman, rather, be taken to see the countryman at work; to share some of the austerities of rural life, to soil his polished shoes in the stableyard while clearing his head of stale sophistications? Or perhaps a compromise may be possible, as in the Swedish national open-air museum at Skansen, where a short tram-ride from the centre of Stockholm brings workers from office, shop or factory straight into the midst of a community of peasants going about their immemorial pursuits amid log buildings transplanted from every part of the land and disposed convincingly about an extensive park.

Thus we may symbolize three courses open to those who would present folk-music in a guise acceptable to urbanized listeners. The tune may be shorn of intractable elements like quarter-tones, subtleties of ornamentation, unusual scale-structure and complexities of rhythm, and pinned like an entomologist's specimen on to an harmonic basis conformable to the current practice of the time. For this method there are only too good precedents in the settings of Scottish, Irish and Welsh

songs commissioned from Haydn and Beethoven by a Scots publisher. At the opposite extreme stand the purists, who reproduce folk-material as far as possible with phonographic accuracy, limiting their own contribution to a bare framework of non-committal chords such as Rimsky-Korsakov gives us in his collection of Russian folksongs. The method of compromise is represented by the work of innumerable collectors and arrangers who, notwithstanding a genuine affection for their material and solicitude for its integrity, remain unwilling to cross what they consider to be the boundaries of decorum in adapting their own competent but conventional style to the requirements of folk melody.

But there is a fourth method of approaching the problem. It is one in which success has been achieved only by a handful of men of special sympathies and talents in various countries: Chopin in Poland, Musorgsky in Russia, Grieg in Norway, Falla in Spain, Bartók in Hungary. It consists in working out, on the one hand, all the implications of folk-music—rhythmic, melodic, formal, even harmonic, as far as folk-harmony may be said to exist; and, on the other hand, in bringing about a perfect fusion of the unspoilt original with the arranger's personal idiom in such a way that the native vitality of the folk-product is given full play while the composer himself draws new creative strength from handling it. What Gilbert Chase has written of Falla and Spanish folk-music may be applied, *mutatis mutandis*, to the other composers just named: "For Falla, a folksong is not a simple tune to be arbitrarily adorned. Each folksong, he believes, conceals a deep musical meaning, a latent wealth of expression, that the arranger should endeavour to extract".¹

Grieg's enthusiasm for Norwegian peasant culture is so clearly apparent throughout his works, and so widely known to the musical public, that it is worth while to inquire how much of his knowledge of folksong and dance came to him from first-hand experience. He was not himself of peasant stock, but belonged to the official and professional classes of Norway with their predominantly Danish background of culture. Educated Norwegians had, however, "discovered" the peasantry of the western and southern valleys some years before Grieg's birth; Asbjørnsen and Moe had published their rich harvest of folktales in the early 1840s, Landstad had worked on the traditional ballad-poetry, and—most important of all for musicians—the distinguished organist Lindeman had begun his great work of collecting more than a thousand traditional melodies from the mountain dales.

Meanwhile, Ole Bull was up and down the world playing his fantasies on Norwegian tunes, among them some that he had learnt directly from peasant fiddlers, such as the celebrated Thorgeir Augunsson, known as *Møllargutten* (The Miller's Boy). It was from Bull's playing and Lindeman's transcriptions that Grieg obtained his earliest experience of Norwegian folk-music. But from the time he settled in the Hardanger region he came more closely into contact with the peasantry themselves, and formed the habit of making annual tours in the Jotenheim mountains, partly for the sake of recreation, partly to carry out field-work in collecting popular tunes. In this way he obtained a number of melodies incorporated into later works, such as 'Gjendine's Lullaby', heard in a mountain farm and set for piano in 'Norwegian Folk Melodies' (Op. 66). But his greatest achievement in this respect came about rather differently and involved the co-operation of two other artists.

The story is told in detail in David Monrad Johansen's biography of Grieg², from which, together with references in the composer's letters,

¹ Gilbert Chase, 'The Music of Spain', p. 188 (Dent, London, 1942).

² Oslo, 1934.

much of the material for this article has been taken. Grieg had just completed his tenth and last book of 'Lyric Pieces' (Op. 71) in 1901 when he received a letter from a peasant fiddler of Telemark, named Knud Dale, asking if Grieg could do anything to preserve the *slaatter* or traditional dance-tunes from complete oblivion. Knud Dale explained that he was the only surviving pupil of the renowned *Möllargutten*, who had died in 1872, and that there was no one else to carry on the authentic tradition of performing these tunes.³ Grieg at once arranged for Knud Dale to go to Christiania to see Halvorsen, and by November 17th 1901, the latter was able to report to Grieg:

Knud Dale has arrived. To-day I rescued two *slaatter* from oblivion. They're not too easy to write down. Little turns and trills that are like a trout in a rapid—when you try to catch them they're gone. Knud Dale is an intelligent and sound player. Ever and anon he had certain tricks, such as mixing 2-4 and 6-8 times, that made me laugh aloud for joy. . . .

Halvorsen sent another bulletin on November 25th:

The *slaatter* are simply divine, and you will find many things to delight you. I should very much like to play them to you before you begin to arrange them. There are some rhythmic tricks that are unwriteable. . . .

Halvorsen also describes how he takes Knud's fiddle and plays the tunes back to him, at which the peasant's eyes "shine with a musician's joy". On December 3rd Halvorsen sent off to Grieg the seventeen *slaatter* he had succeeded in noting down, with a long letter in which he says:

. . . I have tried to write down everything as accurately as possible. There is abundance of repetitions, but that is easy enough to remedy. With regard to the modes it is to be noted that G \sharp is nearly always present in the D major *slaatter*. I myself find G \sharp fresh and amusing, whereas G \natural would seem insipid. Similarly with the trills and other ornaments which, combined with the rhythms of the *slaatter*, give them their chief beauty and distinction. The trills can often be executed only by a vibration of the hand, and have the effect of a veritable "quivering". An exception is the trill on the open A string, which sounds clear and lively. I would stress that even the most intricate ornaments should not take away in the least from the rhythmic flow in the *slaatter*. I practise daily on the Hardanger fiddle and have acquired not a little of the genuine touch. The instrument is full of gurgles and cracklings and chirpings and quiverings.

On December 6th Grieg writes to thank Halvorsen for the transcriptions, which he says he has read through with "gulps of delight", while regretting his ignorance of fiddle-playing, a handicap for which, as usual, he blames "that Conservatory at Leipzig"! The scale-structure of some of the melodies, with the sharpened fourth, interests him deeply: "It was that which made me mad as a hatter in the year 1871." Of course I immediately stole it for my 'Pictures of Folk Life'. He goes on to speculate upon this feature of peasant music which, like Chopin before him, he found so engaging:

It is incomprehensible that no one among us has taken up research into national music, since we have in our folk-music such abundant sources for those who have ears to hear with, hearts to feel with and intelligence to write down.

In spite of Grieg's enthusiasm for his task it did not go easily. In August 1902 the transcriptions were still unfinished, as Grieg told his friend Beyer, partly because he felt more and more self-critical and anxious about preserving unspoilt the fine qualities of the original, and partly because he found it harder to work from a violin transcription than from arrangements such as those of Lindeman, which were already thought out in terms of the keyboard. It was not until February 1903 that Grieg was able to tell Hinrichsen, of the firm of Peters, that although distractions and illness had prevented him from completing the string

³ The social importance of the *slaatter* and their exponents in peasant communities is well brought out in Björnson's story 'Brudeslaatten'.

quartet he had promised he was able to send a new piano work, the Norwegian 'Slaatter (Folk Dances based on the original transcriptions made for the first time by Johan Halvorsen)'.

In the covering letter sent with the manuscript three weeks later Grieg urges that simultaneously with the piano arrangement Halvorsen's original version also should appear in print, particularly as it is a "tit-bit for fiddlers". He justifies his addition of a preface and notes on the ground that the work is of considerable historic interest; and points out that, although the publishers would probably have preferred a completely original composition, his personal touch is quite clearly apparent in the arrangements—perhaps a little more so than many people will like! His next communication to the publishers insists firmly on the exact wording of the title of the Halvorsen transcriptions as follows: 'Norwegische Bauerntänze *Slaatter* für die Geige solo—wie dieselben auf der norwegischen Bauernfiedel gespielt werden. Originalaufzeichnung von Johan Halvorsen'. Three points, Grieg says, must be clear to the public: (i) that the music is arranged for the *ordinary* violin; (ii) that the violin is to be *solo*; (iii) that this is the *original version*. "I know well enough that the piano has the best chance [*i.e.*, of popular favour], but the importance of the original—to the expert—cannot be over-estimated". Grieg's unfailing modesty and generosity towards his friends is one of his most endearing traits. In a postscript to a letter to Hinrichsen dated September 4th 1903 he again calls the publishers to task for referring to the solo violin version as an "arrangement".

Halvorsen's work is not an arrangement, but a faithful and complete *transcription of the Peasant Dances*, just as the fiddlers themselves play them. He himself has not added a single note to them. Since this is the first time such Norwegian dances have been published in *their original form*, it is precisely this circumstance—that they are accurately reproduced—that is of the highest interest to the scholar, and you have by publishing them done no small service—perhaps without knowing it (?)—both to musical scholarship and to Norway.

Grieg's adaptations, published as his Op. 72, were taken up enthusiastically in two very different quarters. By 1906 they had been discovered by the more progressive young musicians of Paris, who were delighted with "*le nouveau Grieg*". And Percy Grainger, then in his middle twenties and an avid collector of Icelandic, Faroese and Norwegian folk-music, was playing the 'Slaatter' in a way that gave Grieg more satisfaction than the renderings of many of his own countrymen, and made him refer to the young Australian as a matchless interpreter of his (Grieg's) special art—an encomium that to British readers will perhaps be enhanced by richer associations when they see it in the original German of Grieg's letter to Hinrichsen: "Für meine bescheidene Kunst ist er ein Dolmetscher sondergleichen".

* * *

The *Hardangerfele* (Hardanger fiddle) belongs to the same class of stringed instruments as the *viola d'amore*, being equipped, in addition to the customary four strings of the violin family, with a set of four sympathetic strings below the fingerboard. Halvorsen recommends the use of the mute to give to the ordinary violin a semblance of the veiled, unearthly tone of the more elaborate peasant instrument. In his preface he also gives some information about the tuning of the Hardanger fiddle; more than one tuning is employed, but the most usual one is middle C, with F, C, G above it, the sympathetic strings sounding F, G, A, C above middle C. Departures from this method are indicated as they occur; for example, No. 8 of the 'Slaatter' requires middle C, G, C, G, with the

same tuning for the sympathetic strings as already given, and for Nos. 4 and 10 it is B \flat (below middle C), F, C, G, with F, G, B \flat , C above middle C for the sympathetic strings. It should be added that in transcribing for the ordinary violin Halvorsen frequently calls for a *scordatura* in order to facilitate drone effects and double stops characteristic of the Hardanger fiddle, and in such cases he uses transposing notation. Other features of the peculiar style of the *felle*-players are noticed in Halvorsen's preface: the manner of executing shakes, for example, which are often taken with the semitone below the main note or (in double stopping) with alternating fifths and thirds below. Halvorsen insists on the importance of paying attention to his indications of tempo, bowing and dynamics, if anything like the original effect is to be reproduced.

It is obvious that the Hardanger fiddle must give rise to the most delicate and subtle effects of harmony, brought about partly by the nature and variety of its tunings, partly by the acoustic properties of its sympathetic strings and partly by the traditional use of a profusion of double stops, trills and ornaments as elaborate as the *agr ments* of the French clavecinists. Recent research has discredited the idea that polyphony was entirely an invention of the medieval church and that, in the words of one writer, "the folk know not harmony". Apart from the *locus classicus* in the 'Itinerary' of Giraldus Cambrensis there is a growing weight of evidence that some forms of part-singing and chordal playing were practised, at least among the more northerly peoples of Europe, at a very early date. M. D. Calvocoressi wrote in his recently published 'Survey of Russian Music':

The collections of [Russian] folksongs published by Balakirev, Rimsky-Korsakov and most others give the impression that these songs are all monodic. . . . But a good deal of the peasants' singing is part-singing—part-singing of a rough, very archaic kind, generating unexpected harmonies and abrupt, elliptic concatenations. The outcome often is widely different from anything a trained composer would have dreamt of perpetrating in those days.

Here the writer gives an example of Russian folk-harmony such as may, he suggests, have had an important influence on the harmonic idiom of Mussorgsky.

Much the same might be said about the harmony of the Norwegian *slaatter*-players of which, indeed, Calvocoressi's Russian example is strangely reminiscent. And it was the harmony, actual and implied, of these traditional compositions that gripped the imagination of Grieg, whose interest had always been in harmony and tonality viewed from the standpoint of colour rather than of form. In his pianoforte adaptations, therefore, he attempts not only to translate the actual notes of the *slaatter* so carefully recorded by Halvorsen, but also to capture the overtones and undertones of their harmony, a task for which the pianoforte was the ideal medium. At the same time, as Grieg himself said, the folk elements in the music are wedded to his own musical idiom, a process that was made all the easier because so much in that idiom derived from Norwegian folk-music.

Only by means of numerous quotations in music type could the extent and originality of Grieg's contribution to the *slaatter* be adequately demonstrated, and any time spent in going through, side by side, Halvorsen's original transcription and Grieg's adaptation is rewarding.

My object in arranging the music for the piano [wrote Grieg in his preface] was to raise these works of the people to an artistic level, by giving them what I might call a style of musical concord, or bringing them under a system of harmony.⁴ Naturally, many of the little embellishments, characteristic of the peasant's fiddle and of their

⁴ Thus the English translation in the Peters edition. Grieg's Norwegian is both clearer and more concise, and may be simply translated: "through what may be called stylized harmony".

[sic] peculiar manner of bowing, cannot be reproduced on the piano, and had accordingly to be left out. On the other hand, by virtue of its manifold dynamic and rhythmic qualities, the piano affords the great advantage of enabling us to avoid a monotonous uniformity, by varying the harmony of repeated passages or parts. I have endeavoured to make myself clear in the lines set forth, to obtain a definite form. . . .

In attempting to achieve his aim Grieg displays great skill in varying the short, much-repeated phrases of the tunes without in any way destroying the naïvety and vigour of the original. The whole range of the piano is brought into service, the lower registers being treated in a way that can hardly be paralleled in the literature of the instrument earlier than the works of the French impressionists who, as we know, were captivated by "le nouveau Grieg". In two of the pieces—Nos. 4 'Haugelaat'—a Halling associated with a charming legend recounted in the notes) and 7 (a dance of similar character) Grieg resorted to a device he had already used in the 'Norwegian Dances' (Op. 35), making a middle section out of the same material as the original tune transformed in tempo, rhythm and mode, and wonderfully enriched with modal and chromatic part-writing. A passage in the Lydian-mode in No. 7 is particularly beautiful.

On the other hand, many of the settings are held together by unifying rhythmic motifs—often given out in the introductory bars—derived from the tunes themselves but transformed into basses of a most convincing austerity. No. 1 of the series ('Giboën's Bridal March') may be taken as typical. It begins *ppp* with an *ostinato* bass alternation of bare fifths and fourths in the rhythm known to jazz pianists as "basic off-beat". The right hand then begins in the tenor register, keeping at first very closely to the two-part polyphony of the original and using with discretion some of the peasant fiddler's characteristic turns of ornament. This first four-bar phrase of the tune is repeated twice, an octave higher each time, with slight rhythmic and harmonic changes and with a gradual *crescendo*, until both hands thunder it out in double octaves, fourths and fifths in a way suggestive of the medieval *organum*. A new phrase strikingly contrasted in register and dynamics is now introduced, and Grieg begins to make play with a device he hit upon perhaps independently of Chopin, although more probably he was unconsciously influenced by that hero of his younger days. Gerald Abraham, in his book on 'Chopin's Musical Style', has shown how the Polish composer found in the sharpened fourth of the peasant scales not only piquant touches of melodic colouring but also suggestions for novel effects of harmony by relating this note to the chromatic system of contemporary music. Grieg does the same. In this particular case the G# steals in, as one might say, in peasant disguise, but soon introduces a whole series of chromatics in the scalar form, often combined with a pedal, so much beloved by Grieg from the earliest stages of his musical career. A few bars later this same highly distinctive personal feature is merged even more completely with its surroundings by being given a "protective colouring" based on the peculiar "peasant trill" between a stopped and open string as already described, and developed into a piano *tremolando* of alternating seconds in a low register—another impressionistic effect that still sounds audacious. This *tremolando* unifies the whole middle section of the setting and is made to lead back to the rhythmical double-pedal bass upon which a short coda—another original contribution, as the *slaatter*, like most folk-dances, generally end abruptly—suggests the receding sounds of the wedding music. Apart from the rhythmical interest of the 'Slaatter' themselves, with their combinations of triplets and pairs of quavers, their changes

from triple to duple time, and the ceaselessly fascinating play of their ornamentation, Grieg's alertness to seize upon a rhythmic idea in the original and develop it organically ranges these pieces among the most interesting things of their kind in modern music. We may take, as another example, No. 3—also a bridal march, with a middle section built upon a descending scale of four notes repeated thirty times—and trace its origin in the melody of a passage near the end⁵ at No. 10 ('Knut Luraasens Halling' I) where the alternations of duple and triple *grouping* in the folk-tune have prompted a setting in which duple and triple time are combined.⁶

Ambiguity is, indeed, one of the secrets of Grieg's success in this work—ambiguity of rhythm, of tonality in the juxtaposition of diatonic, modal and chromatic treatment, and of harmonic structure in the unusual combinations achieved by the copious employment of pedals, which are among the oldest resources of folk-harmony. We have seen that the Hardanger fiddle creates an harmonic "aura" of great beauty and complexity, and this is reflected and enhanced in the effects Grieg obtains from the modern piano—effects which, we repeat, still sound novel; too novel, apparently, for most performers and audiences who, while joining in the fashionable derision of almost everything Grieg ever wrote, rarely give themselves the trouble of examining, much less playing or having played to them, this remarkable product of his maturity.

⁵. See p. 14 of the Peters ed., fourth line, first bar.

⁶. Grieg's friend Röntgen was to use this and other devices in his popular arrangements of Dutch folk-tunes.

REVIEWS OF BOOKS

Papers Read at the International Congress of Musicology, held at New York, September 11th to 16th 1939. pp. 301. (American Musicological Society, New York, 1944.) \$2.50.

No explanation is given of the late appearance of this volume. Nothing in it, however, can be said to date, except the welcome extended to the delegates by Carleton Sprague Smith. What we miss is the actual experience of the music performed at the congress—American folksong, unpublished works by Handel, a medieval programme, and the like. The papers fall into fairly definite groups, but one cannot help being conscious, as so often on these occasions, that it is only the accident of the congress that has brought them together. Some are slight in content and hardly deserved permanence: they are rather *prolegomena* to more substantial essays. Others make useful contributions to the byways of musicology, even when the result is negative, as in Curt Sachs's paper on 'The Mystery of the Babylonian Notation'. The most valuable paper is Alfred Einstein's on 'Mozart's Handwriting and the Creative Process', which slays false assumptions about Mozart's methods and makes perfectly clear the way in which he used preliminary sketches. Knud Jeppesen's 'Venetian Folk-Songs of the Renaissance', though informative, is disappointing because of its lack of critical judgment. A perfectly ordinary piece of music is described as "entertaining and fascinating in its rhythm", perhaps because the words are "dreadfully indecent". Glen Haydon disinters Alfred Day and, though conscious of his fallacies, declares that some features of his system "challenge our attention and are worthy of the careful consideration of every theorist". It would be instructive to hear what Mr. Llewellyn S. Lloyd has to say about this. Otto Gombosi presents a picture of a Greek kithara-player and asks: "What is the man doing with the plectrum"? The answer given is that he is stopping the strings. Charles Seeger envelops the subject of 'Music and Government' in such a blanket of abstractions that no concrete proposals emerge. It is a relief to turn to J. M. Coopersmith's notes on the Handel programme. Here at least are facts—the sources from which the unpublished works were taken. Handelians will gratefully add the information to their files.

J. A. W.

The Singing of John Braham. By John Mewburn Levien. pp. 40. (Novello, London, 1945.) 7s. 6d.

The Technique of Singing. By Kate Emil-Behnke. pp. 183. (Williams & Norgate, London, 1945.) 15s.

Singing Learned from Speech: a Primer for Teachers and Students. By Edward C. Bairstow and Harry Plunket Greene. pp. 83. (Macmillan and Stainer & Bell, London, 1945.)

Singing is the oldest art in the history of music. There was a considerable literature of song long before symphony and sonata began. Singers had reached a notable mastery of their art while instrumental technique was in its infancy. These are indisputable facts. But in spite of all this there is a tendency among serious musicians to regard singers as "invaluable to anecdote, immaterial to history" and of little significance to the art of music generally. Singers, in their turn, rely too much on voice and too little on musicianship for their success and focus the greater part of their attention on the hybrid art of opera and the dramatic individualism of oratorio solos. Teachers add to this uneven emphasis by an astonishing pre-occupation with physiological jargon and esoteric theories which are as diverse as they are devastating. It is time for a little of the fresh air of common sense to be let in on the subject. These three books are a good excuse for doing so and, in their fundamental differences, provide excellent material for argument.

Mr. Levien is at pains to extol the virtues of a voice rather than a singer in the wider sense of that term. To do so he draws on interesting recollections and an engaging fondness for and identity with the musical life of the early nineteenth century. Informative and pleasing as he is in these respects I, for one, am still not impressed with the subject of his biography. Whatever Braham's vocal abilities, it was vocal exhibitionism rather than singing of which he was the master. The music to which he gave the greater part of his attention has been rightly consigned to a merciful oblivion. The nostalgic fallacy that there has been no clown like Grimaldi, no actress like Siddons, no violinist like Paganini and so on, is artistic defeatism. The evidence is inconclusive. There will be those who would not willingly exchange the skill and musicianship of (to cite another tenor) Eric Greene for John Braham or his peers, despite any plausible differences in mere vocal attributes.

But it is the interpolation of an article on 'The Scientific Justification of the Historic Method of Voice Production' by Dr. George C. Cathcart which ultimately links Mr. Levien's pleasant book with the second one on my list. Between it and Miss Emil-Behnke's book there are differences of opinion as well as of approach. The physiology of the vocal organs bears the same relationship to singing technique as the mechanics of pianoforte manufacture to pianoforte playing. Neither more nor less. So far no singer has been made in Harley Street, nor did Menuhin achieve his impeccable technique by a study of the material and acoustical research which went to the making of the violin. The instrumentalist can and often does learn the very fundamentals of his technique on an imperfect instrument. He does not improve that technique by tinkering with the material construction of his instrument. If it is inadequate he simply acquires a better one. The singer has not that advantage, but a knowledge of vocal physiology will not give it to him. The anatomical diagrams which fill Miss Emil-Behnke's book are those of a normal vocal mechanism, not an imperfect one. Then why tinker with it under the strange fallacy that this is the technique of singing? Dr. Cathcart's approach, on the other hand, is more logical. Accepting certain principles of voice production which "were arrived at empirically", he decides that "they must be founded on a true scientific basis because they gave perfect results", and his essay is a presentation of that scientific basis as it would appeal to a medical man. It is significant that, to cure himself of certain vocal defects, he studied with a singing-master rather than a physiologist; and his remark that "physiologists... are not generally versed in the principles of voice production" is even more so.

Now it must be remarked that voice is only manifest in sound. Ear-training should therefore be a primary concern in voice-production. A person who is born deaf is also dumb; the reverse is not the case. A defective and unmusical ear will certainly prevent the possessor of the most perfect vocal mechanism from realizing his real potentiality as a singer. A whole essay could be written on the implications of a well-trained aural perception as it pertains to the musician in general and the singer in particular. Intonation, tone-quality, tone-colour, tonal contrasts, purity of enunciation, indeed almost the whole range of a singer's art and achievement is determined by the scope and subtlety of his aural perception. It is the omission of this important consideration which is my only criticism of the third book on my list, a book which is at once forceful, characteristic and thoroughly instructive. The title reveals its logic and the authors' names are indicative of the practical nature of its teaching. Here is a book which all singers and singing-teachers should read, not necessarily to agree fully with its tenets, but to be refreshed and enlightened by its vigorous commonsense.

We live in times when the true art of singing is somewhat in decline. It is time for it to be rejuvenated by purer ideals, a saner technique and a better musical status. It will not find these in the physiologist's waiting-room nor in the cult of any remarkable

personalities of the past. Vocal exhibitionism has been too long on a pedestal. Audiences are too easily hypnotized by a striking voice and lack the ability to appreciate a real singer and lovely songs. Meanwhile the present-day prevalence of reproduced vocal tone is decidedly harmful and is another reason for underlining the importance of aural training. The crooner's "art" is accepted by the multitude for singing. It has even infected the singing film-star, whose voice, in any case, can only be heard through the medium of a machine which must sacrifice purity of reproduction for amplification of sound. Truly it may be said that we have heard with our ears and our teachers have told us! It will be the quiet wisdom of such as Sir Edward Bairstow and Harry Plunket Greene which will do "more than anything else to revolutionize English singing, and change it from a bad imitation of the Italian style—largely taught in this country by Italians—to a healthy, native art."

S. N.

The Singing Church: an Outline History of the Music Sung by Choir and People. By C. Henry Phillips. pp. 279. (Faber, London, 1945). 21s.

This is precisely the sort of book one welcomes. It is a treatment, not in great detail, but judicial and practical, of church music considered as a vital part of the English musical heritage. The arrangement of the book is admirable. Produced in conformity with authorized economy standards, it is nevertheless a pleasure to possess and to handle. It says much in the fewest words, and these, though enriched by the author's evident erudition, make such very inviting reading that I read the book straight through from title-page to colophon. Even when covering ground which has already been well trodden—that of the Reformation period, when a new impulse was given to church music by the necessities forced upon musicians by the Prayer Book of 1549—Dr. Phillips never fails to be stimulating and interesting.

The book is divided into six sections. Five of them correspond to clearly defined periods of church history, while the sixth—"An essay on Principles and Practice"—is a summary of modern problems with suggestions as to how they may best be solved. The opinions here are the author's.

It is, however, in keeping with his general method that historical data are freely given in the other sections. The wide range of the author's study is indicated by the authorities quoted and by the bibliographies given at the end of each section.

In any examination of church music it is proper to begin with plainsong. Dr. Phillips gives a useful sketch of this system of music. But though he tells us that the officially approved Solesmes method has not found universal acceptance, he does not make it clear that the controversy between the Accentualists, the Solesmes school and the Mensuralists is intense and is still raging. The bibliography at the end of this section might usefully be expanded by the addition of three more titles. Max Springer's 'The Art of Accompanying Plain Chant', 'A Grammar of Plainsong' by a Benedictine of Stanbrook and 'The Interpretation of Plainchant' by Alec Robertson. These, though not treating specially of Anglicized plainsong, are most helpful. 'The Elements of Plainsong' (Quaritch, limited edition) is, unless I am mistaken, out of print.

"None of the harmonized music written before 1500 is in use in the modern service, and it would appear that research has not yet unearthed any very usable music of the period". A rather drastic statement, this, which is qualified by a footnote. It would seem, however, that 'Worcester Mediaeval Harmony' may have escaped notice, since some of the thirteenth- and fourteenth-century pieces from that collection have been sung with considerable effect and a few have even been printed as 'English Gothic Music' in a recent performing edition produced in the United States. There are other things besides Worcester, most notably several pieces from the Old Hall MS, which have been in use at Westminster Cathedral for many years. The Roy Henry Sanctus from this collection is used in C. of E. places as well. It is probable that much more of the large amount of music from 1200 onwards which has been unearthed might be found usable and would be available to the "Singing Church" were publishers assured of quicker financial returns.

Since church music is ideally subordinate to liturgical requirements, it is appropriate that Part II, the longest section of the book, should begin with a survey of the origins and development of the distinctive Liturgy of the Church of England. In the first part of the book Dr. Phillips explains the structure of pre-Reformation services. Here, as an introduction to the music of the sixteenth century, he summarizes the history of the Prayer Book in a way which cannot fail to be a corrective should the book fall into the hands of any who think church music consists of bits and pieces thrown in anyhow and anywhere with the object of producing a bright and hearty service. On the tiresome question of musical interpolations Dr. Phillips delivers himself with much boldness when discussing the 1928 Revision. "Processional and recessional hymns sung at the start and finish of a service mar the ends", and again, with reference to the end of the Mass, "The service ends on a note of gratitude and giving of thanks which some churches spoil by chanting a sentimental *Nunc dimittis* as the choir file out—surely a liturgical *faux pas*; any hymn and any organ voluntary at this point should stress the note of thanksgiving on which the service ends".

Dr. Phillips's broad mind embraces whatever stands highest in degree of excellence in a great variety of moods and styles. It is good to find him so enthusiastic about the music of the sixteenth century. Though not a study for specialists in sixteenth-century polyphony, these chapters are scholarly and sufficient. It is much to be hoped that perusal of them may encourage choirmasters to use the musical treasures of the period now in print. As compared with its contemporary madrigals, Tudor church music is seldom performed. Yet, as Dr. Phillips urges, it is specially suited to the normal cathedral choir—essentially a "chamber" combination. Is it too much to hope that well-trained parochial choirs may soon find pleasure and satisfaction in performing Byrd, Gibbons, Weelkes and the rest?

Choirmasters coming to this music for the first time may be bothered by the necessary transpositions. Dr. Phillips explains why all this music is usually transposed up a minor third (cf. quotation from Gibbons in F, p. 85, given in A \flat). Might one suggest, with some diffidence, that examples of sixteenth-century music are better shown without transposition. The look of the untransposed original seems to give a better idea of modality. In performance, experience shows that editorial suggestions need not be too slavishly followed. Tallis in the Dorian mode, for instance, may be put up to F \sharp minor with splendid effect.

Dr. Phillips discusses congregational music in Part III. The problem, which is often debated to-day, was urgent in the seventeenth century. The "pious but stubborn" hymn-singer was a thorn in the flesh of the earnest musician. As every choirmaster knows, he is still often very tiresome. Association and the resentment of the average man against change, even for the better, remain serious obstacles to reform. How great a variety of interests was involved in a matter which was as difficult as it was fundamental is clearly explained. To sum up: "The church had been fighting against regular metre ever since the days of Augustine: it had at last succumbed".

Among the lessons to be learnt from this section there is one of much practical import. It is this: Boys teach each other; never let a sound musical tradition go to pieces. Dr. Phillips does not exaggerate when he writes: "A good choir cannot be made out of raw boys in under three years".

Parts IV and V are devoted, first, to the period from Croft to Wesley; secondly, to a factual summary of the past seventy years. It is in keeping with the general plan of the book to single out a few names for special mention. Croft, Greene, Boyce, Battishill and S. S. Wesley, "perhaps the most remarkable man to appear after Blow and Purcell", are selected to represent the most effective writing of the period. When the story is brought down to our own times Dr. Phillips's balanced judgment rightly gives prominence to Stanford's achievement without unduly and uncritically praising all he wrote.

On the vexed question of hymns and hymn-books Dr. Phillips is objective and always practical. The explanation offered for the failure of the admirable 1904 revision of Hymns A. & M. shows how easily and unexpectedly the success of a good thing may be imperilled by unthinking prejudice. A reference to "drastic bowdlerization of Christian texts" in 'Songs of Praise' will no doubt be noted with approval by many who nevertheless admire some of the musical qualities of that compilation. Dr. Phillips's plea for a revaluation of Dykes is timely: if we are to be comprehensive, we must surely find a place for representative Victorians. But can we really include Victorian tunes as period pieces if we subject them to "a little judicious editing" involving "simple harmonic changes"? That is exactly what we blamed the naughty, smug Victorians for when they tampered with the music of an earlier age.

The four special chapters on organ accompaniment are excellent. Organists, who are urged to use the tonal resources of the instrument sparingly, are advised to remember what kind of accompaniment the older composers had in mind. Dr. Phillips wisely refers the reader to a standard work on plainsong accompaniment, and he is very cautious in estimating the probable future awaiting the electronic organ. No one will quarrel with his sound advice on the general question of the use of the organ in church: "the player is playing the building as much as the pipes". But in the matter of the right kind of accompaniment for seventeenth-century music—antedating the invention of the swell—Dr. Phillips states his point about contrast so persuasively that another point of view—that the discreet use of modern expressive devices in accompanying the music of any period is not entirely blameworthy—may be overlooked.

The book will be most useful to all who take an interest in church music. It ought to be in the hands of every parson and every organist. The interesting plates and the excellent musical illustrations are very attractive features of a most conspicuous contribution to the study of our musical heritage.

A. T. S.

Seven English Songs and Carols of the Fifteenth Century. Transcribed by J. Copley, Leeds School of English Language: Texts and Monographs. pp. 20. (Chorley & Pickersgill, Leeds.) 3s. 6d.

In this present age, anything of a serviceable nature about the music of the late or early Middle Ages is more than welcome. In this pamphlet the author has given us a series of seven English vocal pieces from the fifteenth century, which can be practised

and studied without the employment of those expensive and often unprocurable editions that can only be found in certain libraries.

Apart from the author's transcriptions, which judging by their content seem to be in perfect conformation to the times, there is a short account of the compositions and period in question. The music of these early centuries is confusing and complicated, and even after several years' study it is by no means easy to come to a reliable conclusion. The author, however, has made a brave and sincere attempt to give these few English songs a concise and clarified background. The explanation of their construction is generally clear, though it is not exactly fair to say that the contra-tenor "wanders about freely but unsteadily", or that the concord at the end of a phrase or piece "scrupulously" omits the "third" of a chord. The truth is that the fifth and octave were conceived as perfect consonances. The author mentions that three-part writing in the vernacular is nowhere to be found in England before the fifteenth century; which, if true, is interesting, though it can be found in France and Italy from the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries at least. Again, it is not exactly true to say that the repeat forms of the songs "exhibit a mannerism of the Machaut school", because similar types occurred in the Florentine and Troubadour forms. As a whole, however, the general remarks are edifying, such as the advice about words and syllables, or the character of the tenor and descant, apart from other points of interest. For my own part I would not say that the songs were "suitable for male or female choirs", but rather for solo voice and instrument or for two voices alone, particularly if the parts were written separately on the manuscript. Even in the three-part carols, which were written in "score" form, I doubt if more than five or six singers actually took part.

The English are interesting at this period, for by their comparative conservatism they give a better picture of what was truly fifteenth-century in spirit than the cultivated and ambitious attempts on the Continent. Dufay and his predecessors were definitely superior in artistry and sweetness of expression, the German organists had a greater sense of development, while Italy's cultivated suavity, though mostly a closed book, had promise for further things. But such examples as 'Danger me hap'—'As y lay'—'Nowel Syng We', with their almost rustic simplicity, give us a perfect vision of the atmosphere of the fifteenth century with the naivety of its illuminated manuscripts. The author, however, has taken the liberty of using the *texts* of the latter two for their descants, which by being under the tenor might have applied to both voices, as in many other songs in score of the period. In the three-part 'Go Hert' the textless and separated tenor and contra-tenor, on the other hand, has been filled up by the words of the descant. This may have been possible, but one cannot be certain that these parts were not instrumental.

English music, if simple and unsophisticated, maintained its original smoothness of style, though it must be remembered that the fourteenth-century Florentines had also used a similar though more overlapping 6-3 technique. But compared with the rather arbitrary and bitter methods of the Machaut school, the English had early adopted a smooth and simple type of composition, and in the above-mentioned items the author has given us some useful and attractive examples of the English art at that period.

'Dryngter Fylle' and 'Go Hert' (wrongly compared to a madrigal, either in the fourteenth or sixteenth-century sense) are also an equally excellent choice for three-part writing. Considering the inexpensiveness of this pamphlet, every vocalist who has the taste and intelligence to wish to try these compositions should be advised to possess one.

G. S. B.

Sadler's Wells Opera Books. Edited by Eric Crozier. (John Lane, London, 1945).

2s. 6d. each.

1. *Opera in English.* By Tyrone Guthrie, Edwin Evans, Joan Cross, Edward J. Dent and Ninette de Valois. pp. 45.
2. *Mozart's 'Così fan tutte'.* By Edward J. Dent, Eric Blom and Clemence Dane. pp. 48.
3. *Benjamin Britten's 'Peter Grimes'.* By Benjamin Britten, E. M. Forster, Montagu Slater and Edward Sackville-West. pp. 55.
4. *Puccini's 'Madame Butterfly'.* By Robert L. Jacobs, A. K. Holland and Mosco Carner. pp. 39.

Opera-goers in England have been ill-served in the matter of information concerning individual operas in a handy and accessible form. There have, of course, been more or less compendious volumes containing summaries of the plots of the more popular operas, of which Streatfeild's is the best; but these necessarily give little information about the musical style of the individual operas. The present series of booklets is designed to give a more comprehensive account of works in the current repertory of the Sadler's Wells Opera. Apart from the first, which is introductory and deals with opera in England and in English generally, and at Sadler's Wells in particular, each book contains essays by several hands on the history and the music of one opera as well as a full synopsis of the plot. There are also occasional essays on subjects related to the particular opera: Mr. E. M. Forster on Crabbe, the poet of 'Peter Grimes', and Miss Clemence Dane as

an uninstructed playgoer who would have benefited by reading Dr. Dent's and Mr. Blom's essays, at a performance of 'Cosi fan tutte'.

In the introductory book the most important essay is Dr. E. J. Dent's on 'The Future of British Opera', which is also a most skilfully compressed historical study of its past. Dr. Dent is, of course, a champion of opera in English, as opposed to performances by imported foreign singers, of whose faults and foibles he makes easy game. But, when he remarks that, after the apotheosis of the *prima donna*, the Wagnerian movement brought us "the most degraded of all forms of idolatry, the worship of the conductor", he surely lets prejudice get the better of judgment. It all depends, of course, on the conductor. If he is a man of artistic integrity, it is right that he should have the absolute command of what is first and foremost a musical performance, in which he alone can co-ordinate the several elements. It is precisely the lack of a musical director with experience and authority, and the employment of producers without operatic or even musical training, that has adversely affected some recent productions of opera in English. And, though one may agree most heartily with Dr. Dent that an English company should aim at team-work and ensemble rather than lay stress on the display of vocal virtuosity, it should not be forgotten that good singing is the prime requirement for opera, and all the acting, production and team-work in the world will not make up for its absence.

With regard to the productiveness of British composers in the operatic field, Dr. Dent rightly observes that the chief responsibility lies now with the poets. The composer cannot work in a vacuum, and, as other of these essayists observe, the planning of an opera and the design of its musical structure involves a quite exceptional amount of intellectual labour, which few composers again will undertake unless, as Mr. Tyrone Guthrie says, they see some chance of receiving an adequate reward. Mr. Sackville-West makes the point admirably in his essay on the musical and dramatic structure of 'Peter Grimes':

No composer who has not mastered music, in all its aspects, can hope to be successful in a medium which involves so strenuous a conjugation of all his faculties. . . . If he has not mastered the technique of symphonic development and part-writing, he will approach his libretto without adequate means to handle the various and inevitable connections between the parts of each scene and act, or the ability to manage so complex a texture and balance as opera continually involves. A good opera, then, represents a composer at the height of his powers.

But the composer must have a libretto to approach, and it is up to the dramatic poet to furnish the right material. Too often, as Dr. Dent remarks, English composers have been provided with books modelled upon foreign successes of the generation before. In this respect, at least, 'Peter Grimes' was a hopeful portent.

Mr. Sackville-West's essay on Britten's opera is a model of what such an exposition should be. It sets before the reader the facts of the musical structure without partiality or resort to superlatives, which too often are a substitute for any deep comprehension of the subject-matter. One can say, in all humility, that, having had no sight of the score in advance, one devoutly wishes that this essay had been in one's hand before the first night. Anyone who is going to see the opera will be well advised to read this essay with its ample musical examples. It is accompanied by a brief account of the genesis of the opera and his artistic aims in composing it by Mr. Britten, as well as by a complete synopsis of the story by the librettist, Mr. Montagu Slater.

The booklets dealing with the operas of Mozart and Puccini are also admirable. Dr. Dent again performs a miracle of compression in his essay on the history of 'Cosi fan tutte'. One's only regret is that he spoils the final page with the remark that "we turn to Mozart from the tawdry heroics of early Verdi"—to which cross-examining counsel retorts: "What do you mean by early Verdi?" For surely the admirable translator of 'La Traviata', 'Rigoletto' and 'Il Trovatore' cannot be referring to those masterpieces of Verdi's middle-age. And who, in England, has heard any of the earlier works of Verdi—excepting only the partially earlier 'Macbeth' at Glyndebourne?

As to "the slobbering erotics of Puccini", for which Mozart is likewise prescribed as antidote, Dr. Mosco Carner makes out as good a case as can be made in defence of 'Madame Butterfly', which of all his operas appears to many even of Puccini's admirers most in need of such advocacy. In addition Mr. R. L. Jacobs gives an interesting account of the literary origins of the libretto and of the details of Puccini's revision of the opera after the initial fiasco—but is he correct, by the way, in calling 'San Toy' Japanese?—while Mr. A. K. Holland discusses the composer's craftsmanship.

Each of the booklets is amply illustrated with photographs of, or designs for, the various Sadler's Wells productions. It is a pity, however, that the frontispiece should indulge in a cheap sneer at Bayreuth. The Kundry of 1888 may look funny to the eyes of 1945, but Materna was a greater artist than Sadler's Wells has yet produced.

D. H.

REVIEWS OF MUSIC

Mozart, *The Ten Celebrated String Quartets: first Authentic Edition in Score, based on Autographs in the British Museum and on Early Prints*. Edited by Alfred Einstein. Publications of the Paul Hirsch Music Library (Cambridge), Vol. 12. (Novello, London.) 31s. 6d.

One of the most remarkable achievements in the history of music-publishing was the great series of *Gesamtausgaben* issued in Germany between 1862 and the early part of the twentieth century. The firm mainly responsible for these many hundreds of volumes was Breitkopf & Härtel, who enlisted for the purpose many of the foremost musical scholars of the nineteenth century, including composers of the calibre of Brahms and Liszt. For some time these finely engraved folios seemed to be the last word in authoritative scholarship; but in the last few decades musicology has made such strides that the ideals of the 1880s seem a little faded by now. The greater part of the Breitkopf Mozart was published between 1877 and 1892, and at that time the relation of the autographs to early editions had not become the subject of exact study that it is to-day. The reappearance of various autographs, long thought to be lost and not available for the Breitkopf editors, has been another factor in spreading the feeling that this edition cannot now be regarded as sacrosanct, even taking into account the many corrections included in the *Revisionsberichte*. But in the present state of the world it is idle to hope for a complete new edition of such a prolific composer as Mozart, although the revision of a few works and certain groups of compositions is a reasonable proposition. The piano Concertos in C (K. 503), D (K. 537) and B \flat (K. 595) appeared about 1935 in the Eulenburg edition with critical introductions, and revisions of several other concertos in two-piano form were published by Schirmer. But none of these, useful though they are, contains anything like a complete list of variant readings such as we now have in Dr. Einstein's eagerly awaited edition of the ten great string Quartets, namely the six Quartets dedicated to Haydn, the Quartet in D, K. 499, and the three "Prussian" Quartets.

Let it be emphasized at the outset that this is far more than just an edition of the music: it is a most valuable contribution to the study of Mozart's creative processes. The prefatory matter consists of a long introduction, followed by an exhaustive *apparatus criticus*: these are printed in both German and English. Dr. Einstein first briefly describes how the ten autographs found their way to the British Museum, after passing through the hands of J. A. André and J. A. Stumpff, and then summarizes some of the faults in the early editions that appeared before 1800, all based on the first without reference to the autographs. These treasures were, however, used by Joachim in preparing the volume of the Quartets in the Breitkopf *Gesamtausgabe*: he was well aware of the defects of the editions current in the 1870s, but unfortunately did not make a really detailed collation. He did not stop to consider whether the autographs were in every case the supreme authority, or whether the first printed editions were sometimes of at least equal validity. Dr. Einstein had to decide this point, and says "Which of these two sources is to be regarded as of greater importance? In other words, did Mozart correct the proofs of his first editions, and if so, to what extent?" He comes to the conclusion that Mozart did correct the proofs of the six Quartets dedicated to Haydn (and hence the first edition is sometimes more trustworthy than the autographs), but probably not of the D major, K. 499, and certainly not of the three "Prussian" Quartets, for which the autographs remain the only authority.

Dr. Einstein has much to say about Mozart's method of working and of the peculiarities of his musical handwriting, and points out, *inter alia*, how the use of a stroke instead of a dot, for marking *staccato*, has often been misinterpreted by publishers and editors and gradually become a mark of accentuation, which is at the root of much exaggeration in performance. Such details as Mozart's practice in the writing of accidentals, double-stoppings and phrase-marks are discussed with fine judgment. Dr. Einstein also elaborates the reasons for his belief, first stated in his edition of Köchel, that two movements of the Quartet in D (K. 575 of 1789) are based on drafts of a quartet begun in the early 1770s and then laid aside.

In the *apparatus criticus* Dr. Einstein notes meticulously every detail of variation between the first edition, the autograph and the Breitkopf edition of each quartet. Every *f* and *p*, every *staccato* mark, every tie and slur has been scrutinized. Mozart's own inconsistencies in repeat passages are recorded and, what is especially interesting, the several instances in which he had difficulty in deciding what indication of tempo he really wanted. Here for the first time are printed all the passages that Mozart cancelled and re-wrote, some of them quite extensive, as in bars 130-142 of the finale to K. 387. Even those of just a bar or two are instructive for the light they shed on Mozart's critical recension of his own music. Individually, many of these corrections do not amount to much; but in aggregate they merge like sparks into a strong flame of criticism from

which Mozart's music comes forth in all its pristine brilliance, fresh, delicate and subtle as in the hour of its creation. It is therefore devoutly to be hoped that Messrs. Novello will issue these ten Quartets in parts so that both audiences and string players may reap practical benefit from Dr. Einstein's painstaking accuracy.

One or two small points in the preface call for comment. On p. 6 we read: "It is natural to suppose that from 1814 to 1907 the autographs of the ten great Quartets remained unavailable for editorial or critical purposes. This is true, with one exception" (*i.e.* Joachim's use of them). But at least two English students had access to the autographs, even if their purpose was not strictly critical. Edward Holmes, whose life of Mozart, the first in English, was published in 1845, visited Stumpff in order to satisfy himself about the audacities of the opening of the C major Quartet¹; and sometime during the 1890s Warde Fowler (a great Virgilian scholar, a remarkable ornithologist and a life-long Mozartian) was freely allowed by Miss Plowden (whose father had purchased the autographs at Stumpff's death in 1847) to study them and ascertain the exact order of the movements.² Concerning the prices paid for the autographs, Dr. Einstein writes: "A year after his [Stumpff's] death, on March 30th 1847, the first six Quartets and the Hoffmeister Quartet were acquired for the sum of £8:8:0 by Charles H. Chichele Plowden, of London, who also purchased the three remaining Quartets from a Mr. Hamilton on the following day for an unknown sum (£4:6:0?)." These figures differ somewhat from those in the copy of Puttick & Simpson's sale catalogue which is now in the British Museum and is marked with the prices paid at the auction of Stumpff's property. From this catalogue it is clear that Mr. Plowden paid £8:18:0 not £8:8:0 for the "Haydn" set and K.499, and that the "£4:6:0?" which Dr. Einstein gives as the amount paid for the "Prussian" set (*after* the sale) to Mr. Hamilton, the original purchaser, by Mr. Plowden, was in fact the actual sum for which Mr. Hamilton bought the three Quartets at the sale. Moreover, bound up with the actual autographs in the British Museum is Mr. Hamilton's invoice disposing of them to Mr. Plowden for a sum now erased, but which can be discerned as a double figure in pounds, indicating a profit of at least 100 per cent to the original purchaser.

The production of this edition is a notable achievement, especially in war-time. The paper is of fine quality and the engraving is beautifully done, with the bar-numbers given at the beginning of each line. It is a pleasure to handle such a volume, bound in covers that reproduce a title-page from an 1800 edition of the Prussian Quartets. The spine is of an attractive blue cloth, which will not, however, stand up long to heavy use such as this volume is likely to receive both in private hands and in libraries. Dr. Einstein's style of writing is compressed and highly individual, and his anonymous translator is to be congratulated on turning the introduction into easy and natural English. But on the title-page we read: "based on autographs in the British Museum and on early prints." This raises two points: first, can "prints" be used, presumably as a translation of *Drucke*, in the sense of "printed editions"? And secondly, since Dr. Einstein goes to some pains to state that in but six out of the ten Quartets is a printed edition (namely the first alone) of authority comparable to the autographs, this reference to "early prints" is unfortunately vague. In such an important publication as this, which will be a standard work of reference for many years to come, it is most regrettable that no date appears on the title-page, or anywhere else in the volume. But these are small points, and they do not detract one whit from the critical and historical importance of the volume, which is a landmark in the editing of Mozart's music. A. H. K.

Bax, Arnold, *Te Deum* for S.A.T.B. and Organ (Chappell, London.) 2s. 6d. *Nunc Dimittis* for S.A.T.B. and Organ. (Chappell, London.) 1s. 6d.

Sir Arnold Bax is not known as a composer of church music, and however genuine these attempts may be, they nevertheless leave an impression of a nondescript style one would not readily associate with the composer's original achievements in secular music. There are, however, some choral effects of touching naivety in the 'Nunc Dimittis', which is undoubtedly the more appealing of the two works; the 'Te Deum' with its unrelieved homophony is inclined to be academic.

Bliss, Arthur, *Auvergnat* (Hilaire Belloc), Song for Voice and Piano. (Novello, London.)

2s.

The pathetic humour of the *gavroche* has attracted many modern composers, and Mr. Bliss's portrayal in this song of a clownish Auvergnat displays a manner, which we have seen in his music before, not far removed from Debussy's 'Minstrels' or Prokofiev's 'Chout'. It has something reminiscent, too, of the composer's earlier 'Rout'. Mr. Bliss knows how to write with a tart sense of irony—irony, but not malice, though had he wished to draw the character more intensely he might well have allowed himself a point of malice. The quaintness of the character is immediately suggested in the jaunty rhythm of the accompaniment against which the voice-part makes its effect by its very casualness.

¹ cf. Holmes's 'Life of Mozart', p. 205, Everyman edition.

² cf. his 'Stray Notes on Mozart', 1907.

Bliss, Arthur, *Three Jubilant Fanfares and Three Solemn Fanfares*, for Military Band. (Novello, London.) Conductor's Part, 1s.

A blazing impression of ceremonial is what is aimed at in a fanfare, and in these examples—two of them written for Sir Henry Wood's seventy-fifth birthday and the end of war in Europe—Mr. Bliss lets loose the full fury of the military band. The cumulative effect of brilliant tone may be more desirable in a fanfare than any subtle complexity of rhythm, but Mr. Bliss is too much of an artist to be satisfied with mere blatancy, even in such ceremonial music. If the wide-spread chords, the insistent triplets and the drum-rolls are well calculated to bludgeon home the message of the occasion, the musician will be interested in them as well, notably in No. 3 of the "Jubilant" set, which contains some moving modulations.

Bullock, Ernest, *Preparations*, for Chorus and Small Orchestra. (Oxford University Press.) Vocal Score, 2s. 6d.

The anonymous text of this work is taken from a Christ Church MS. contrasting the imagined arrival at a humble home of the earthly and the heavenly kings. Dr. Bullock makes elaborate use of counterpoint to set the scene of regal sumptuousness, while the divine arrival is portrayed severely and with due humility. Three arrangements of the work are available: it may be performed with small orchestra, with piano or organ and strings, or with piano or organ accompaniment alone.

Fleming, Robert :

The Oxen (Thomas Hardy), Song for Voice and Piano. (Oxford University Press.) 2s.
Secrets (W. H. Davies), three Songs for Voice and Piano. (Oxford University Press.) 3s. 6d.

Simplicity in itself is not always a virtue. Indeed, such elementary resources as are used in these songs suggest not simplicity but timidity. Mr. Fleming has some pleasing ideas, but he is too easily satisfied with an harmonic idiom which makes use of consecutive fifths in a way amounting to a mannerism. A few modulations add variety to the figurative patterns of the accompaniment, but they do not succeed in adding much to the significance of the poem. Nor do the musical illustrations always convince one of the poet's moods. The most likable of the set is 'The Oxen', which has a graceful line for the voice. 'Love like a drop of dew' has an engaging gaiety kept deliberately light and superficial.

Moeran, E. J., *Prelude for Violoncello and Piano*. (Novello, London.) 2s. 6d.

In the form of a *Lied*, the accompaniment consisting almost entirely of block chords while the melody is given to the cello—here is a beautiful little composition, warm in feeling and potent in lyrical inspiration. It is written with an almost Schubertian spontaneity and with a most graceful sense of harmony despite the unresolved sevenths and ninths. The only weak patch, I should say, is the passage preceding the return to the opening theme where a few bars in a rhapsodic vein come dangerously near a suggestion of sentimentality.

Tippett, Michael, *Boyhood's End* (W. H. Hudson), Cantata for Tenor and Piano. (Schott, London.) 6s.

The title of W. H. Hudson's autobiography, from which the words of this work are taken, is 'Far Away and Long Ago'—an appropriate title which speaks for itself. Mr. Tippett has chosen extracts from the chapter entitled 'Boyhood's End', and they are of an essentially nostalgic character. The treatment, however, is anything but nostalgic: the keyed-up tone of the work is consistently ecstatic. Hudson wrote his autobiography in his old age when grief merged into regret and finally into serenity. Mahler would have been attracted to such a subject, and so, in another way, would Delius. The only conception Mr. Tippett could have had of these words is one in which he imagined Hudson was describing not the recollection of his boyhood experience, but the experience itself. Of course he was not. When, speaking of the cries of the golden plover, Hudson says, "If after a thousand years that sound should float over my tomb, my bones uprising in their gladness would dance in the sepulchre", he is saying something infinitely sad and remote. Mr. Tippett gives to the words "uprising" and "dance" long developed vocalizations in the manner of Handel which turn the passage into a joyous *præan*. The voice-part is written in a brilliant style with wide intervals and many symbolic effects, though it is not a very grateful part for the singer. The piano-part, ingenious enough in itself, is required to add to the search for realism—a misguided search, so it seems to me, which merely succeeds in making a travesty of Hudson.

Vaughan Williams, R., *Thanksgiving for Victory*, for Soprano Solo, Speaker, Chorus and Orchestra. (Oxford University Press.) Vocal Score, 2s.

This is the work commissioned by the B.B.C. for their Victory programmes. Vaughan Williams was the right composer to choose, not so much because of his acknowledged place among English composers, but because no one would have been so sure to avoid any suggestion of rhetorical pompousness. The firm tread of the opening section, on

words from the 'Song of the Three Holy Children', shows at once that although the occasion is of supreme importance the music, for that very reason, is going to be pared down to its essential message. Common chords predominate here, and throughout the work the choral writing is mainly homophonic. Other sections are based on words from 'Isaiah', 'Chronicles', Shakespeare's 'Henry V', and towards the end a choir of children's voices sings verses from Kipling's 'Puck of Pook's Hill'. The form, designed for broadcasting, resembles a narrative cantata. Sometimes the speaker's lines are said against other lines sung by the chorus, producing an effect, much admired in radio technique, of verbal counterpoint. Indeed, Vaughan Williams seems to have adapted himself as easily to the radio as he has recently done to the films. This is music written for a practical purpose, though it is none the less characteristic. Particularly lovely are those authentic passages where a quiet spell is cast by the simplest means: the modulation into A minor preceding the speaker's words "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me" is such a passage and so, too, is the unaccompanied soprano solo which, at the very end, seems to send the work into thin air. Whether it is a work that will make as impressive an effect in the concert hall as on the radio remains to be seen. E. L.

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THE "THEORETICIAN"

To the Editor of 'Music & Letters'

SIR,—May I add a second postscript to Dr. Scholes's interesting letter in your July issue? Helmholtz was insistent that any scientific theory about music must have a *physiological* basis; in other words, that it is not the vibrations we listen to but the tones we hear that matter to musicians. It is easy to understand that a tone-deaf man, interested in what Pole called the "philosophy" of music, as an intellectual exercise, would soon be lost in the intricacies of tunings, which belong to *physics* and are concerned with vibrations. Whether Ellis was as tone-deaf as Miss Hipkins says he was matters less than the fact that he thought and wrote as if he were. More curious than the attention his contemporaries paid to his musical adventures is the attention paid, to this day, to "theoreticians" who have followed him, and who also think and write as if they were tone-deaf, though they can hear quite well. My first contribution to your pages, in October 1938, was a protest against this notion of a *physical* basis of music. It is more curious still that, when Ellis calculated to twenty decimal places the mistuning implied in equal temperament, no one seems to have pointed out that, in a mistuned unison, a difference of one in the twentieth decimal place would correspond, as in actual fact it would, to a beat occurring not more frequently than once in 1,000 million years.

In the April issue of this journal I described Ellis's theories, hopefully, as "long-forgotten". I was quite wrong. Within a few days of the publication of that issue I received the précis of a new scientific paper about the "musical scale of just intonation". On examination it turned out to be a record of experiments made, not with a "musical scale", still less with "just intonation" properly so-called (*vide* 'Music & Letters', July 1943), but with a "duodene", though that name was not used.

Yours faithfully,

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